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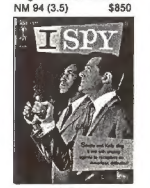

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August 1999

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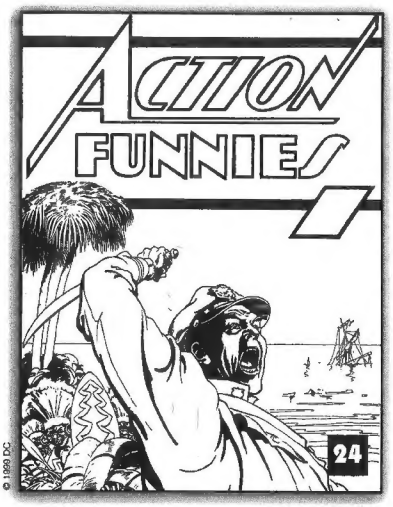

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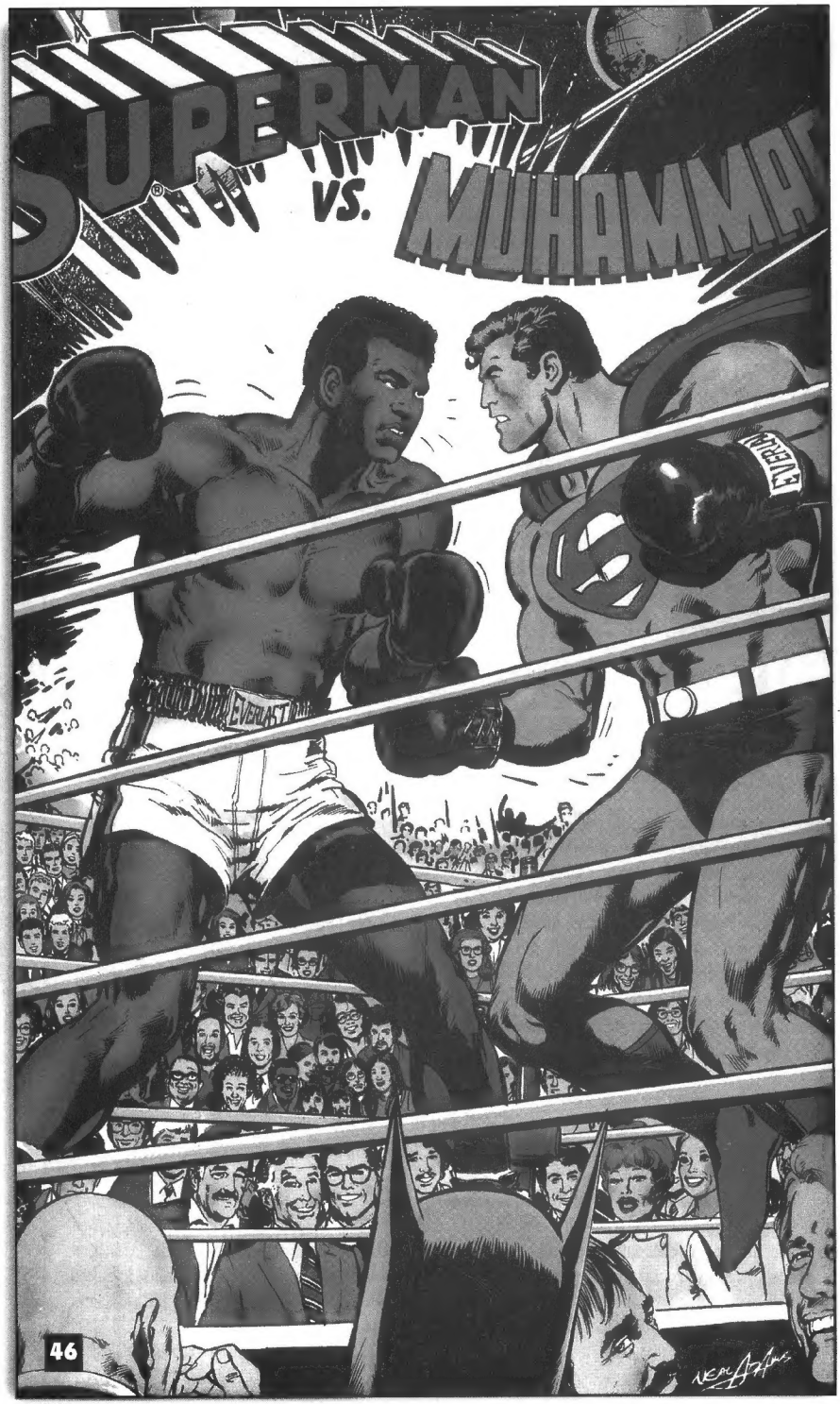

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An All-American Mystery!

Recently, I received the following E-mail letter from *CBM* reader Ross Horowitz. Ross wrote "I recently purchased *CBM* #69 and was quite fascinated by the history of the JSA presented therein. I'm particularly struck by the mention of the rift between DC and All-American.... If DC and All-American were separate companies, when did they merge and which heroes were DC's and which were All-American's?"

Well Ross, your letter brings up a topic that I've been fascinated with for years.

The Gaines' family odyssey is legend... M.C. Gaines ran the All-American side of the house until 1945, when he was "bought out" by the Donnenfelds, the owners of DC. (A few have speculated that this buy-out was more of an "unfriendly takeover" although no one has ever nailed this down to my satisfaction.)

M.C. Gaines later met an untimely death in a boating accident in 1947, after which his son, Bill Gaines, took over his fledgling publishing company, EC. The rest (*MAD, Tales from the Crypt, Weird Science*) is history.

M.C. Gaines' biggest titles from 1939-45 included (among others) such heavy hitters as *Flash, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, All-American, All-Flash, Comic Cavalcade* (Gaines' answer to *World's Finest*), and *All-Star*.

One can get a sense of the M.C. Gaines/DC partnership chronology by looking at covers. To determine the beginning of the partnership, note that Gaines' flagship title, *All-American,* ran from issue #1 (April 1939) through #14 (May 1940) with no company symbol on the cover (The title WAS the company, of course.). Then, beginning with issue #15 (one issue before the *All-American* logo changes and GL is introduced) suddenly the DC circle appears. I feel that the addition of the DC circle to the cover of *All-American* #15 provides us with a general starting point for the formal partnership... spring of 1940. (Some historians feel that the reason the companies worked in concert was that it allowed for better leverage getting paper allotments and for more competitive distribution.)

Just as the cover of *All-American* #15 gives us a probable starting point, All-American-produced issues published during 1945 can provide similar insight about the impending "rift" between Gaines and Donnenfeld.

Take *Comic Cavalcade* covers for example. As expected, issues #1-9 (through Winter 1944) display the DC symbol. But beginning with *Comic Cavalcade* #10 (Spring 1945) through #12 (Fall 1945) the DC circle has been replaced by "An All-American Publication" in a new larger circle... with no trace of DC to be found on the cover. Then with issue #13 (Winter 1945-46) the All-American circle suddenly disappears and the DC symbol mysteriously returns.

The All-American circle replaced the DC symbol on other M.C. Gaines-controlled issues as well, including *Green Lantern* #14-17 (Winter 1944-Fall 1945), *Flash* #62-67 (Feb. 1945-Oct./Nov. 1945), *All-Star* #24-26 (Spring-Fall 1945), *Sensation* #38-47 (Feb.-Nov. 1945), *All-Flash* #17-20 (Winter 1944-Fall 1945), *Wonder Woman* #12-14 (Spring-Fall 1945), *All-American* #64-69 (Mar. 1945-Nov./Dec. 1945), etc. (There are other titles that support my supposition as well, including *Funny Stuff, Picture Stories from the Bible,* etc.)

In my book, these issues date the "rift" as starting in late 1944, continuing into 1945, and culminating in the DC "takeover/buy out" of Gaines' titles in mid 1945. Then, previously All-American titles start showing up at the stands as DCs once again in late 1945.

As to why the Gaines/DC "rift" began, some have suggested that Max was unhappy with his share of earnings, at a time when DC was really cleaning up. I speculate that if he was posturing for more money (or even for an upcoming sellout), supplanting the DC symbol with the All-American symbol would have really gotten the attention of the Donnenfeld hierarchy (and reasserted his legal claim to many mainline titles and characters). But regardless of what caused the split, I continue to believe that the end of WWII and the Gaines departure from DC are the two seminal events that heralded the end of DC's Golden Age.

Thanks for writing, Ross... I hope this info helps you get at least a little perspective on one of the more interesting... and intriguing mysteries in comic book history.

Gary

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Pulps

In acquiring a large high grade comic collection, I ended up having to buy the collector's pulps as well. They are awesome! They sell extremely well; and rightly so.Most have terrific covers, stories by Lovecraft, Howard, Bradbury, etc., and are cheap when compared to comics. Check out the website for images on many of these gems.The majority of the pulps offered here are exceptional condition for the medium.

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Startling Stories	3/52	VG	$20.00
Startling Stories	5/40	Fine-	$50.00
Startling Stories	5/47	Fine	$30.00
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Startling Stories	5/48	FVF	$60.00
Startling Stories	5/48	Fine-	$30.00
Startling Stories	5/50	VG	$20.00
Startling Stories	6/49	VG	$25.00
Startling Stories	6/49	VG-	$30.00
Startling Stories	6/52	VG	$18.00
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Startling Stories	7/39	Fine	$60.00
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Startling Stories	7/48	Fine	$30.00
Startling Stories	7/49	VG-	$24.00
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Startling Stories	9/47	FVF	$45.00
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Startling Stories	11/42	Fine-	$60.00
Startling Stories	11/48	Fine	$60.00
Startling Stories	11/48	Fine	$60.00
Startling Stories	1/39 (#1)	Fine	$150.00
Startling Stories	Fall 1943	Fine	$60.00
Startling Stories	Spring 1944	Fine	$45.00
Startling Stories	Spring 1944	Fine	$45.00
Startling Stories	Fall 1944	Fine+	$45.00
Startling Stories	Winter 1944	VG	$45.00
Startling Stories	Summer 1944	GVG	$25.00
Startling Stories	Summer 1945	Fine+	$60.00
Startling Stories	Summer 1945	VG-	$18.00
Startling Stories	Spring 1946	FVF	$60.00
Startling Stories	Summer 46	Fine+	$55.00
Startling Stories	Fall 1946	FVF	$45.00
Startling Stories	Spring 46	VG-	$25.00
Super Science Stories	1/41	Fine	$70.00
Super Science Stories	1/49	VG	$30.00
Super Science Stories	1/50	Fine	$60.00
Super Science Stories	3/50	VG	$40.00
Super Science Stories	5/50	VG/F	$30.00
Super Science Stories	7/50	VG/F	$30.00
Super Science Stories	9/50	VG	$50.00
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Super Science Stories	11/50	Fine	$45.00
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Ten Detective Aces	2/36	Fine	$125.00
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Ten Detective Aces	4/34	Fine	$90.00
Ten Detective Aces	4/34	Fine+	$110.00
Ten Detective Aces	5/34	Fine	$90.00
Ten Detective Aces	6/34	Fine	$70.00
Ten Detective Aces	6/34	Fine	$90.00
Ten Detective Aces	8/34	Fine	$150.00
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Ten Detective Aces	11/34	Fine	$110.00
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Thrilling Wonder Stories	10/50	VG/F	$30.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	10/50	VG/F	$26.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	12/47	VG+	$20.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	12/48	Fine	$50.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	12/49	GVG	$18.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Fall 1944	Fine	$40.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Summer 44	FVF	$50.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Spring 44	Fine+	$45.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Winter 44	VG	$30.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Spring 45	VG	$45.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Fall 1945	VG/F	$30.00
Thrilling Wonder Stories	Winter 45	Fine-	$30.00
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Weird Tales	4/34	Fine+	$300.00
Weird Tales	4/36	VF-	$350.00
Weird Tales	4/37	VF-	$200.00
Weird Tales	5/36	FVF	$250.00
Weird Tales	5/37	Fine+	$225.00
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Comprehensive comic mag

Really enjoy and look forward every month to receiving CBM. I can't say enough good things about it. It's the best and most comprehensive comic magazine that I've ever read. I especially enjoy reading Michelle Nolan's articles every month.

Michael Calabrese, New York

Mile High Question

Have been a collector of Superman/Batman titles for about 22 years, and just recently purchased a Mile High book (Detective #138) from a trusted source. I'm not very familiar with the Mile High collection, but was very impressed with it. I compared it all my Golden Age comics and found that the TEC #138 was similar in look and smell to two high grade Golden Age Superman comic books (#21 and 24, yes, the flag cover) that I bought while in Colorado several years ago.

I doubt very seriously that the Mile High copies of Superman #21 and 24 are unaccounted for, but thought I should check into it. I know you and many of your readers are recognized Mile High experts, and was wondering if any of your readers knows who has the Mile High copies of Superman #21 and 24?

Kirk Ticknor, via E-mail

Not in my book!

Enjoyed the latest CBM (#68, May 1999) with its Apes focus. Of particular interest to me, as an original artwork collector (since about 1982) was the Michael Naiman report, Skillful Squiggles and Scratches. I don't particularly agree that size of original art should play a significant part in its value; surely quality of illustration ought to be the main consideration? For myself, I'm a collector of aesthetics, and 'size of artwork' doesn't rate too highly on my own list of priorities. Anyway, Johnny Craig and John Severin, during their EC period, began illustrating stories at a reduced 12" x 9" image size, as opposed to the normal 18" x 13", with no noticeable effect on artwork standards.

As to condition, Naiman suggests that paste-over corrections will significantly impact the value of original art. Not in my book! It's common, with the artwork that has passed through my hands, to discover that paste-overs usually cover aborted illustrations; as such, unpublished art! To me, that's a bonus!

I thought the best part of Naiman's report was the quote by East Coast collector, Jon Mankuta, who says: "Buy what you like... be it artist, or character, make sure you are buying it for you... original art is not an investment!!! Art doesn't appeal to a 'broad' market... it appeals to a specific market." That's sound logic that the speculator species of so-called comics enthusiastic ought to take note of....

Terry Doyle, Cheshire, England

His real name was Leo

Think your readers would be interested to know the true identity of the man who edited all and wrote most (under dozens of pen names) of ACG comics. He used the name Richard Hughes professionally, but that was NOT the name he was born with!

His real name was Leo Rosenbaum

After ACG folded, he spent his last few years writing occasional stories for DC mystery books. I got this info from the curiously un-illustrated, slim volume: Forbidden Adventures; The History of the American Comics Group Michael Vance 159 pp. HC, no illustrations, price $53.95 includes shipping (but probably no longer available) 1996 (some of this material originally appeared in The Comic Buyer's Guide), Greenwood Press, Westport, CT. At $54.95, this academic tome was worth every penny to me, but I can't imagine many who would agree!

CBM #69 was great as usual. The cover (uncredited as far as I can find so far) looks like original art. Did you commission it? Gee, looks like Toth could have done it... except for the "pocket" shading on the Sandman's left thigh and the Spirit's left-side cape. Pocket shading is the term I've heard old-timers use for the Eisner-esque manner of cupping a set of feathered lines inside two curved lines. Nice eye candy!

On another front: My comic, "Space Chicks & Businessmen" will not only be printed by Fantagraphics, but has also been picked up by the Village Voice, which will put it on their new website, when it goes up (soon?).

Did I mention that I'm writing "The Science of The X-Men" for Byron Preiss Visual?

Thanks for keeping up the quality of CBM! It's a joy to read!

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All those in favor...

I second the motion put forth by Steve Morrell... by all means run articles on the Charlton heroes. Keep up the good work.

Mark Proskey, Illinois

The "dolls" I liked best

Loved the cover for CBM #66. (I've met a few difficult women in my life that deserved similar treatment.) "The Spirit Women" was an interesting feature. The "dolls" I liked best were: Autumn Mews, Black Queen, Ice Waters, Lorelei Rox, and Thorn Strand.

"The Riddle of Batman & Raven" feature was an intriguing read. The mystery continues, and it would take someone like Batman himself with his detective skills to unravel. This is the situation when something like H. G. Wells' Time Machine comes in handy. I get the impression that Frank Foster's Batman was expanded upon

to create the modern (DC) Batman.

The MAD feature was great. Out of the covers you featured my favourites were #53 (The Grand Canyon), #50 (The Billboard), and #59 (Halloween). Out of the back covers, the one I liked was #40 (Sailem… don't inhalem).

The Market Reports make me wonder how the dealers survive in this industry. It's good to hear the Internet is turning out to be really useful (and not just for information surfing), although I would not want to see all business in the future conducted through cyberspace. Nothing beats service "up front."

Finally, why don't you expand your magazine to include Platinum Age comics?

Kon Calembakis, Australia

Explosive Bronze Age

Was interesting to hear Al Mindy's perspective on the rarity of DC Bronze Age Gothic Romance books in the Marketplace Mail in CBM #69. I must agree that both the Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love and Sinister House of Secret Love are tough finds in low grade and nearly impossible to find in high grade. My own personal quest to acquire the four books from each series took five years and was finally completed last month with an eBay purchase of DMFL #3. The other DC Romance giants, namely Super DC Giants #17 and 21 as well as DC 100 Page Super Spectacular #5 may be scarcer than the Gothic books, but their recent volatile prices have left them beyond the reach of most Bronze Age collectors. I saw a DC 100 Page #5 this week at $695! I believe this book is nowhere near as good an investment as a Giant Size X-Men #1, or a House of Secrets #92. Time will tell if these explosive Bronze Age books have any staying power.

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I thoroughly enjoyed Jon McClure's article on the history of DC's oversized giants. Great investigative work, ferreting out the twisted, convoluted, numbering system of DC that has baffled collectors for years. The checklists will also prove a valuable tool for collectors of these desirable books. The prices of Bronze Age giants have gone crazy over the last few years as collectors realize that they contain hard to find Golden Age reprints at a still-affordable price.

These books have some great covers as well, featuring the art of Cardy, Adams, and Wrightson making them doubly collectable. Take for example the cover of 100 Page Super Spectacular #4 by Wrightson. Many collectors rank this cover as one of the best black covers, if not the greatest black cover ever produced!

Keep up the great work…

John R. Stuart, via E-mail

More Marvel please

I am an ardent reader of your excellent mag. While the content is beyond reproach I must bring to you what I perceive as a lack of attention (maybe because of space considerations or the like) to the Silver Age Marvel era. I am a fan/reader/collector of most everything from that period and own a complete collection of all

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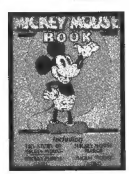

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#66 Women of the Spirit, Batman & Raven!
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Marvels from November 1961 through November 1986, Westerns being an exception. But I still feel that some more articles on the Marvels of this period need to be done.

Articles detailing the histories of certain characters or rogues galleries of particular foes (Spidey's would be interesting) or even synopses of a particular run of certain titles (much like what you did with the JSA in the CBM #69). Focusing on some of the more memorable events of that period (first coming of Galactus, appearance of the Kree on Earth, etc.) I believe would evoke a real nostalgic feeling within many of your readers.

As an example, your last issue was 99% an all-DC issue and many of Marvel stalwarts found very little to read in those pages. What I am trying to say is I hope you can devote a couple extra pages each month to a period in comics history which revamped the whole industry.

Hopefully you'll consider what I said and we'll be seeing a few more pages devoted to Marvel in future issues. Best Regards,

Hafeez Amin, via E-mail

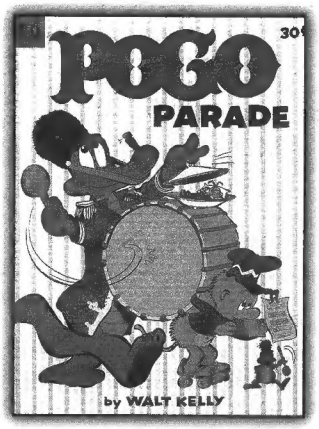
Your request is well taken and I'll endeavor to include more Silver Marvel material in future issues. I have tried to include a number of Marvel articles in past and future issues (see CBM #67, 68, Special Edition #2, and the upcoming CBM #72 for Marvel entries), but we can surely work to please Marvel fans such as yourself. Thanks for your feedback.

Dell Giant Price Variant

While I was pricing some books for this year's Chicago Comicon (I still can't quite bring myself to call it Wizard World...), I came across this price variant on Pogo Parade. While at the show, I showed it to Pogophiles Steve Thompson and Maggie Thompson and many dealers and collectors. No one had seen this variant before. (In fact no one had seen or heard of any price variations on Dell Giants.)

The indicia and contents are exactly the same as the 25¢ issue. Speculation ranged from "Dell had to pay an additional fee for Pogo to Kelly's syndicate, so maybe they tried to pass it along to consumers," to "maybe it's a Canadian issue." I've owned the issue for over 15 years, so I can't remember where it came from.

Anyway, with all the hubbub about price variants today, I thought I'd share this one with CBM readers. And for the record, I could have sold it five times. The highest offer I turned down was $500 for this Fine/Very Fine copy.



Gary Colabuono, Illinois

I've been avidly collecting Dell Giants for more than two decades now, and I've never seen nor heard of any price variants in all that time. (We do know there are several back cover variants, some with cartoons and some with ads.) Your discovery will surely set a few squarebound, giant, Dell, and Kelly collectors back on their heels... considering your 30¢ Pogo is the only known copy! 500 clams? Whew... I'll wager it's worth a tad more....

Wonder Woman strip?

CBM #69 was awesome! From the fantastic cover to Nolan's Notebook, the cover story, and Mark Ameen Johnson's JSA Silver Age article, this issue will be hard to top!

Wonder Woman was mentioned a lot in these features and as a long-time Wonder Woman fan, this issue gave me other ideas to add books I would have overlooked (All Star, Comic Cavalcade) to my Wonder Woman (WW, Sensation) collection.

On another note, I have heard through the years that during the '40s there was a Wonder Woman syndicated strip much like Superman and Batman had (although hers was short-lived). Does any CBM reader know if these have been reprinted anywhere or where I could get original newspapers or facsimile copies?

Thanks for another great issue and I look forward to next month's Batman feature in CBM #70.

Corey Holmes, New York

Silhouette of the devil

First, let me convey my admiration for your efforts to bring credibility to the comic book industry, much-maligned, yet, in certain time periods, a source of joy and nostalgia. I feel certain one of your know-it-all-about-comic book readers can help me reclaim a book I've missed for quite some time. The book is an issue of Our Army At War, circa 1973 (the time of The Exorcist). A recruit named Havoc becomes a part of Easy—despite several seemingly-fatal encounters, he returns unharmed. At the climax, he is borne away by a pillar of fire in the silhouette of the devil. I hope some DC war afficionado can assist me in determining the issue number so I can once again enjoy the book which made so lasting an impression.

Michael Merick, Ohio

Batman mask variant

Was reading through CBM #69 and I came across the article on the Junior Justice Society kit. I noticed that the article also included the Supermen of America Action Comics and leader patch. I was rather impressed to see the Supermen of Canada patch actually getting some attention. Although very little is currently known about this patch I can say that there are several in private collections currently. Of the examples that I have seen all were discovered in Canada.

Another often-skipped item is the 1943 Batman Paper Mask. The interesting thing about this variant is that there is additional printing on the front of the mask. I have seen several examples of this variation, considering that the mask itself is scarce. The variation to the mask is even harder to locate.

The mask reads "State Theatre New Serial Starts Mon., 22 Each Monday After Plus–Deanna Durbin in "Hers To Hold."

The green lettering printed on the mask appears to have been done in the mid 1940s. After discussing this mask with several premium collectors, I located several other examples. Less than ten of the masks with the variation are currently known. It is the general opinion that this additional printing was added after the mask was given out by the Philadelphia Record.

So, did some enterprising theatre owner gather up the masks and later use them as a give-away in his theatre? To say the least it is another marketplace mystery....

Tom Gordon, via E-mail

Forerunner of Grodd

Finished reading your gorilla issue (#68) a few weeks ago, and coincidentally, I had pulled Strange Adventures #39 off of my back issue reading list.(I only bought the issue in April '97—not too far behind in reading!). That's the one with Capt. Comet prosecuting a gorilla on the cover. It appears in your cover gallery.

What struck me about the John Broome-written story was that the super-ape in this story (and the one that preceded it, but which I have not read) was a forerunner of Flash's enemy, Grodd.

The ape was one of a tribe of super-apes, and he had amazing mental abilities, similar to (but not identical) to Grodd's force of mind power. In only six pages, there was- *(Continued on page 76)*

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1919. Tape repairs and some crayola.			
Bringing Up Father	**#2**	**VG/F**	**$280.00**
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Bringing Up Father	**#3**	**VG**	**$160.00**
Bringing Up Father	**#5**	**G/VG**	**$130.00**
Minor crayola.			
Bringing Up Father	**#6**	**G/VG**	**$130.00**
Bringing Up Father	**#8**	**Fair**	**$40.00**
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Bringing Up Father: Big Book		**VG**	**$480.00**
Keeping Up W/T Joneses	**#2**	**VG/F**	**$240.00**
Little Orphan Annie	**#1**	**Fr/Gd**	**$80.00**
1926. Crayola first few pages.			
Little Orphan Annie	**#3**	**VG**	**$140.00**
Little Orphan Annie	**#4**	**Good**	**$75.00**
Little Orphan Annie	**#5**	**VG/F**	**$210.00**
Little Orphan Annie	**#6**	**Good**	**$60.00**
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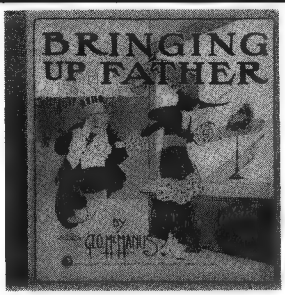
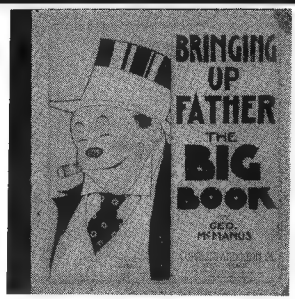
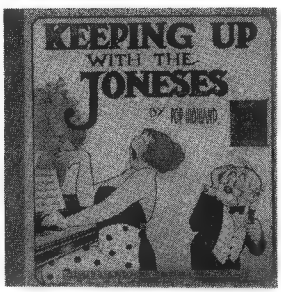
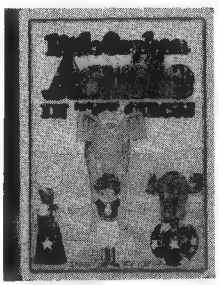
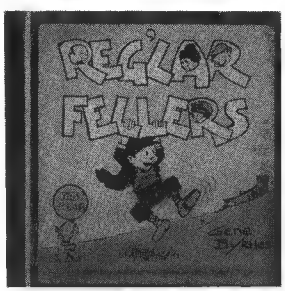
1913 Ball ed. A few tears inside. Nice pgs!			
Mutt and Jeff	**#3**	**VG/F**	**$600.00**
1914 Ball ed. Nice copy.			
Mutt & Jeff Books	**#6**	**G/VG**	**$160.00**
Mutt & Jeff Books	**#7**	**Fr/Gd**	**$85.00**
Crayola on bc; generally rough w/ tape.			
Mutt & Jeff Books	**#11**	**VG/F**	**$360.00**
Mutt & Jeff Books	**#14**	**Fair**	**$55.00**
Oh Skin-nay!	**1913**	**VG**	**$140.00**
Popeye Book	**#4063**	**VG**	**$425.00**
1935. Not in Guide. Whitman.			
Reg-lar Fellers (1921)	**#1**	**VG/F**	**$270.00**
Smitty	**#1**	**G/VG**	**$130.00**
1928. Pencil erasure; Nice pages!			
Smitty	**#3**	**Good**	**$65.00**
1930. Has pencil/crayola erasure.			
When a Feller Needs a Friend		**Good**	**$100.00**
1930. Not in Guide. Rare. Stain.			











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A Thousand Words

By Pat S. Calhoun

Photo covers on comic books most often have the characters portrayed by the actors and actresses who have played their roles in movies or on TV. This enables those who have seen the screen versions to make a quick recognition of the characters on the newsstand, which frequently leads to a quick sale and a strong crossover audience. Publicity pictures usually furnish the cover images, professionally posed and shot, and in most instances the artists on the inside render the characters to match their screen selves. All this has led to a lot of awesome photo covers, and some of them have graced great comics.

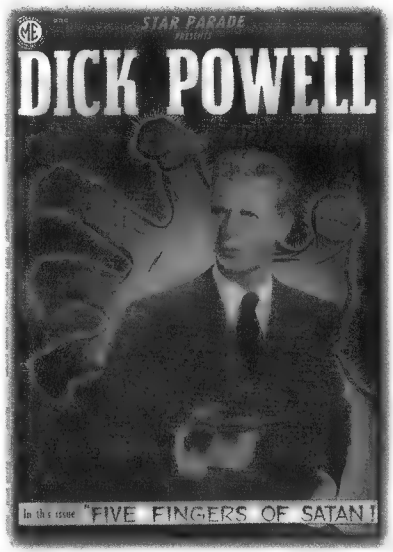
While there had been photo covers prior to the post-War years, it was in the late 1940s that they really proliferated, decorating many of the crime, western, and romance books that emerged from that era as comics began targeting an older audience.

Magazine Enterprises (ME), Vin Sullivan's excellent Golden Age/Atom Age publishing company, issued many of their books as part of an "ongoing one-shot series" umbrella-titled *A-1*. *Star Parade—Dick Powell Adventurer* appeared as *A-1* #22 in 1949. This strange and wonderful book, takes Dick Powell (famed for playing Raymond Chandler's supreme detective Philip Marlowe in *Murder, My Sweet*) and casts him as himself, an actor, who witnesses a murder and gets drawn into the situation intending to find out "who done it."

Five Fingers of Satan is a compelling, perfectly paced, four-chapter 32-page cover-to-cover novel. When Powell's investigations reveal that the victim was killed by an international crime syndicate, he decides to pursue the man and woman who drove the car the murder was committed in after they flee to Lisbon, Portugal.

The woman gets a job dancing flamenco in a night club, and Powell watches the show and confronts her afterwards, only to get blackjacked by her "Limey" (British) associate. These are two of the five fingers, guided by the mysterious "body of the hand" known as Satan. As Powell closes in on Satan the fingers come—one by one—to grisly finishes, and Dick sums up their fate afterwards with a wicked one-liner. Before the "thumb" dies he almost kills Powell by beating him with a length of chain while Dick holds on for dear life to the undercarriage of a speeding train!

This one is the real McCoy, and Paul Parker, who drew the "Scotland Yard" series for ME's *Manhunt*, outdid himself on the art, with a wealth of gritty detail, especially in the faces, with Powell's looking pretty battered in the last couple of chapters. The cover makes a good mix of line art and Powell's photo and provides classy packaging to an outstanding early graphic novel.



Actor Dick Powell (shown here on the cover of A-1 #22, 1949) was the star of many private eye and tough guy films of the 1940s and is especially remembered for his portrayal of Philip Marlowe in Murder, My Sweet, the movie of Raymond Chandler's novel Farewell, My Lovely.

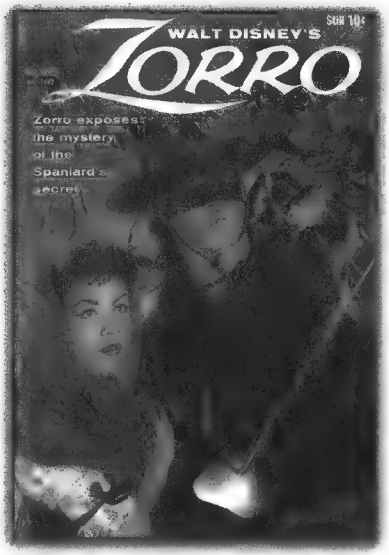
Sometimes the last issues of a comic's run are among the most interesting, as is the case with *Nyoka* #75 (January 1953). Nyoka took on a new look for the final three issues (#75-77), replacing shirt and shorts with a halter top and short-shorts. The result (especially as posed all in red on the lush photo cover) was a boldly provocative jungle girl. What a blazing beacon she must have been on the newsstands to cure the Christmas chill! The latest *Overstreet CBPG* lists this as a "photo cover from the movies" although Internet research has yet to identify the charming model.

The three-part 21-page novel inside, "Nyoka and the Jungle Myth of Terror," is less memorable than the cover, a somewhat perfunctory "lost valley" yarn where the jungle girl discovers Griffins—the winged lions of legend. It's quite readable and mildly amusing but fails to develop the nice narrative hook of the mythical monsters with any imaginative detail or to make the characters' motivations anything more than plot devices.

The back-up material is the usual Fawcett old-fashioned gag strips, including four pages of "Colonel Corn and Korny Kobb." But, be that as it may, this is still a fun book with its strongest feature right out front... that sizzling photo cover!

Zorro (*Four Color* #1037, September/ November 1959) sports a splendid photo cover of the TV Zorro, Guy Williams, and guest co-star, Annette Funicello. Annette was popular from

her presence on Disney's televised *Mickey Mouse Club*, and Walt Disney awarded her the Zorro episode as a present for her sixteenth birthday.



Annette Funicello guest-starred with Guy Williams on an episode of Disney's TV Zorro, and Dell adapted it to create Four Color #1037 (Sep/Nov 1959) with art by Warren Tufts and a beautiful photo cover.

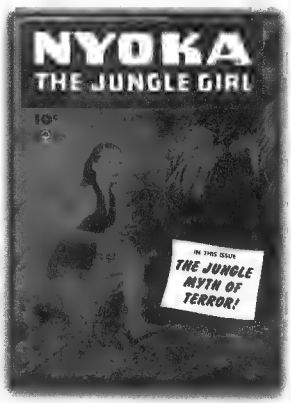
The mystery of "The Spaniard's Secret" telegraphs its solution rather loudly but moves fast enough (as did the TV show it was adapted from) that there's still enough suspense to more-or-less sustain the 26 pages it runs. Annette plays a rich Spanish girl just arrived in California who learns that no one in Los Angeles has ever heard of her father or his ranchero—leaving her stranded.

Fortunately Don Diego Vega (who is Zorro's secret identity) happens by and offers to let her stay with him. Some larcenous locals decide there's money to be made by unraveling the riddle she presents, and Zorro must intervene to protect her until he can find the answer. This is the first issue to feature Warren Tufts' art, and he made a handsome job of it.

It's worth noting that Dell had been publishing Zorro for almost a decade before the TV show started, having put out their first issue in conjunction with the 1949 film re-release of 1940's *The Mark of Zorro*. The pre-Disney issues are better written than the TV translations and come packaged with some incredible painted covers.

There are also many fine comic book photo covers that do not have movie or TV stars posing, and while the characters are often professional models, there are several sought-after covers posed by comic book creators, such as DC editor Jack Schiff climbing out a window on a *Gang Busters* cover or the famous shot of Stan Lee rigged out as the Black Rider. But the "star" covers are important because they lured that crossover audience to the four-color excitement of graphic storytelling.

Fawcett published a lot of photo covers, especially on their romance mags and two movie titles. For this first of the last three issues of her run (issue #75, Jan 1953), Nyoka wore a skimpier costume and a sultry look.



Pat Calhoun has been collecting, researching and appreciating comic books since the early 1960s, and is a nationally recognized comic book historian. Originally a Coronadan, Pat and his family now reside in Santa Rosa.

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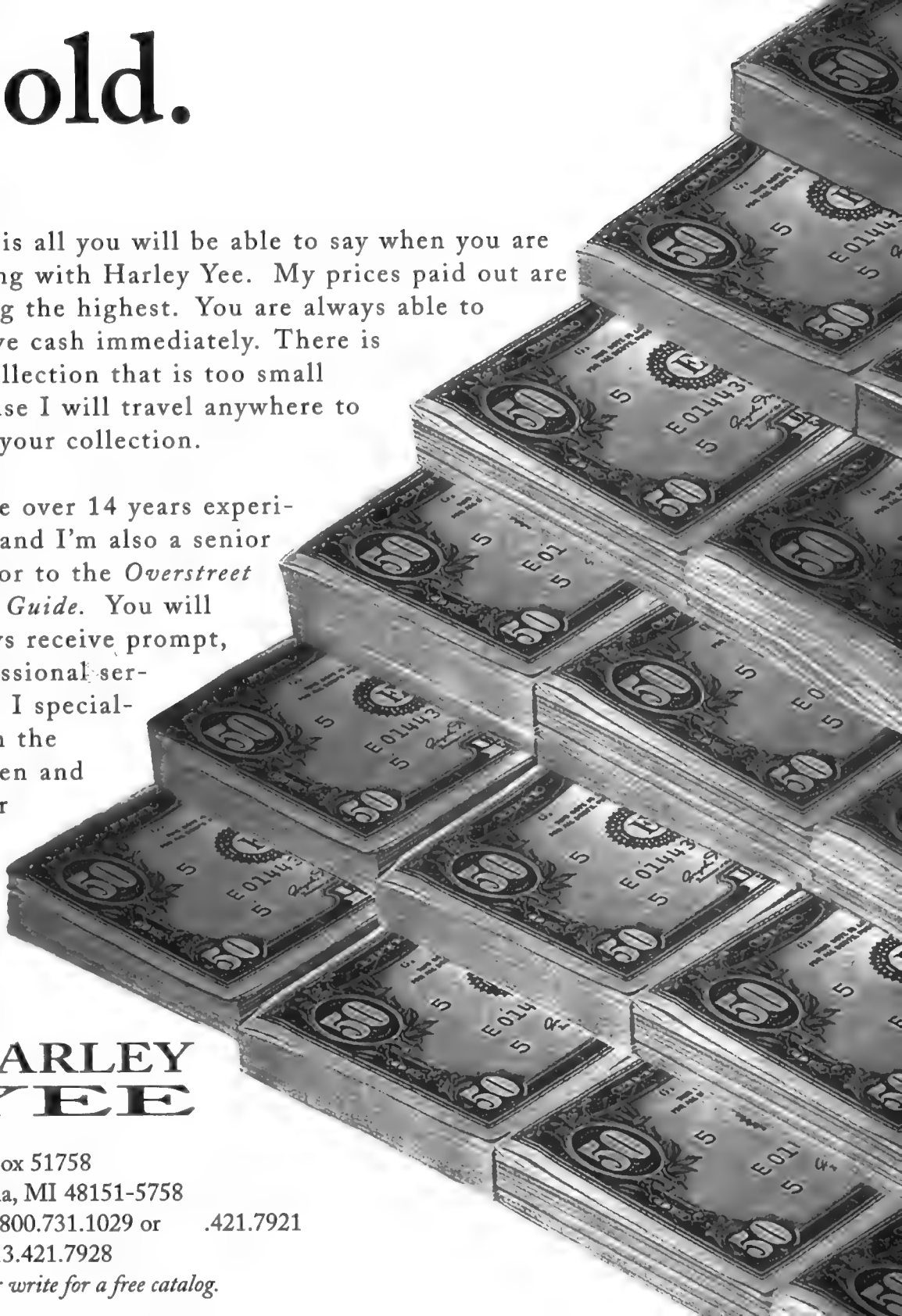

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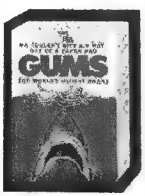

Wacky Packages Original Art

WANTED

If you have any original 5x7 paintings to Wacky Packages (even if they are not for sale) please contact me so I can leave you with an offer (and stop looking for it).Cash paid or will trade. Please note: I am not looking for the individual stickers.The following is a partial wish list. Please contact: Eric Roberts 260 Atherton Avenue, Atherton, CA. 94027 Telephone (650) 327-6570 Email: plastered_peanuts@yahoo.com

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Camals Cigarettes
Campy Soup
Grave Train
Cracked Jerk
Crust
Kook-Aid
Skimpy
Schmutz Beer
Quacker Oats
Cracked Animals
Coronation Milk
Fink

2nd Series
Gurgle Baby Food
Cap'n Crud
Fish Bone
Hurts Tomatoes
Dull Pineapple
Brittle Soap Pads
Run Tony Shells

3rd Series
Snatch a Pak
Hawaiian Punks
Hungry Jerk
Drowny Softner
Sweat Hard soap

4th Series
Milk Foam
Gatoraid
Mess Clairol
Land O Quakes
Grazin Bran
Freetoes

5th Series
Head & Boulders
Shot Wheels
Knuckles
Sicken of the Sea
Slaytex
Triks Ceral

6th Series
Play Dumb
Super Cigar Crisp
Bar-Kist

7th Series
Mr. Goodbye
Oh Hairy Bar
Blast Blew Ribbon

8th Series
Canadian Clod
Paid Killers
Bone Ami
Burpsi Cola
Ivery Snow

9th - 16th Series
Killy Putty
Mountain Goo
Mud
Progreaso Sauce
Alpain Cereal
Barman
Milk Muds
Brandy Land
Creep
Crocked
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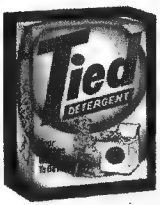
Fanatical
Ain't
Playbug
Slayer Asprin
Hippy Trash Bag
Shingle's Plaster Chips
Gums
Bawl Park Franks



Notebook No. 50!

Michelle gives a special tip o' the hat to fellow collectors Bud Plant and Jim Vadeboncoeur!

By Michelle Nolan

If you're like most collectors of Golden Age and Silver Age comics, you collect more than just those fascinating four-color pieces of Americana.

In other words, you collect comic book books.

Many of your favorite comic book artists also do, be they veterans with a half-century of experience or the young guys and gals working in the current comics scene.

Until *The Great Comic Book Heroes* by Jules Feiffer appeared in 1965, you could count on the fingers of one hand the number of volumes devoted to comic books. Since then, hundreds of books devoted to comics have appeared—and in many cases have disappeared.

Where do you find these treasured tomes?

You go where I go: to Bud Plant Illustrated Books, run by Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr., of Palo Alto and Bud Plant of Grass Valley.

As a resident of the Peninsula hills not far from San Francisco, I'm fortunate to live less than a half hour from the 4,000-plus volume BPIB stock in Palo Alto.

Even if you can't visit in person, however, you can go there either on the Internet or through one of the extensively illustrated BPIB catalogs.

In the interest of full disclosure, let me say I've been extremely fortunate to call Bud and Jim friends for more than three decades. That's why this column, the 50th consecutive installment of Nolan's Notebook, is pretty special for me.

That's because it wasn't my idea, but rather Gary Carter's. Ye Editor of *CBM* is well aware of the treasures to be found at BPIB, so he asked me to do this column. I jumped at the opportunity because I firmly believe in Bud Plant Illustrated Books—and not just because they occasionally buy books from me in my work as a book scout.

BPIB is simply the place to go to learn about illustrators, be they comic book artists or classic pen-and-ink specialists of the 19th century. If you like fine art, BPIB will knock your socks off.

Why do I think BPIB is so good? Simple—because it's run by two guys who have spent their entire adult lives researching and collecting art, virtually all of it of interest to comic book artists and/or collectors.

Bud is well-known for nearly 30 years in the field as the proprietor of Bud Plant Comic Art, the world's largest supplier of in-print) comic-related and pop culture-oriented publications. If you've ever been to the annual comic conventions in San Diego and Oakland, you've seen his huge displays, since he sets up what amounts to a temporary store.

Bud is a life-long comic collector, with one of the finest collections of Golden Age comics and related books, original art, and other material... along with a fabulous library of illustrated books. Together, with the late Phil Seuling, Bud helped created the direct market in the mid-1970s.

Nationally known comic book collectors/historians Jim Vadeboncoeur and Bud Plant at the 1995 San Diego ComicCon.

Jim is not as well-known, but he should be. Jim and his longtime buddy, Hames Ware of Arkansas, may know more about comic book artists and their styles and history than anyone in the world! It's astonishing what they know—and they say it's equally astonishing what they feel they have yet to learn.

Jim loves to share his knowledge and opinions (many *CBM*ers are familiar with his no-holds-barred comments in "Marketplace Mail"). Like Bud, he has a wonderful library of illustrated books and is one of the nation's leading experts on the subject. He also boasts a collection of untold thousands of Golden Age, Atom Age, and Silver Age comics, including complete runs of all Atlas horror, crime, superhero, science fiction, war, and western comics, along with nearly every Atlas romance comic and most of the humor titles (whew... and they aren't easy to find, either).

The three of us have spent more than 30 years trading infor-

mation, and simply loving comics and related material. Among the three of us, I feel sure that we've probably seen virtually every Golden Age and Silver Age comic ever published... and I know we've seen every book ever done on the subject.

Jim recently retired from a long career as a technical illustrator for Hewlett-Packard and now runs BPIB full-time. Karen Lane, the woman with whom he has shared his life since 1971 (and plays the other big role in BPIB), plans to retire soon after a long career as a computer systems analyst with the same firm. That will enable her to devote her talents full-time to the illustrated book business as well.

What makes BPIB special is that Jim and Bud take great delight in helping to educate collectors... as well as selling books to them.

"I really feel the crucial element in our success is that Bud and I have opted to educate collectors," Jim says. "Our descriptions are way more detailed than average... and we love to help our customers learn about these great artists."

Bud Plant chats with the legendary Joe Simon at the 1998 San Diego Convention.

Bud Plant with two of his outstanding staff... La Donna Padgett (left) and Alberta Severino.

By the way, I find it very interesting that, for more than a decade, the entire business has been run on a handshake! That's the kind of people Bud and Jim are.

They fell into the business in the 1980s as a way to sell their duplicates and to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge they had acquired while visiting countless numbers of used-bookstores. They put out their first catalog in 1983. The second was delayed for a few years for various reasons. Jim, displaying the sense of ironic humor that has become legendary, numbered it #1 and called it "another catalog."

How successful have they become? Well, in the past year, they have sold more than 2,900 books!

"I love the business. The only thing I feel badly about is that Bud gets to go out and find more books than I do!" quips Jim.

"There's nothing like scouting books," Bud says. "It's a great feeling to discover a great old illustrated book." It's even better when you can discover duplicates to sell at a profit! For the most part, Bud and Jim have copies in their libraries of most of the books they sell.

One of the fascinating aspects of their business is that they often sell to the same artists whose books they peddle. And many of these artists aren't shy about providing testimonials.

"They keep me up to the rafters with ever-more old-to-current discoveries of so many hues (and with dispatch) plucked from their ever-so-burgeoning catalogs," writes Alex Toth. "They are professional, top to bottom, and my primary source of art-related books. (Their) honest assessments/descriptions of all entries... do add to informing potential buyers of same as few other booksellers trouble to do. Rarely have I been disappointed following their leads." says noted illustrator William Stout:

"BPIB is perhaps the world's best source for the discerning collector of representational art and illustration. Their selection is hand-picked for the highest quality, using their own broad knowledge as collectors themselves. Fairness is a hallmark of their dealings; I have never known Jim or Bud to price gouge, unlike so many other prominent illustrated book dealers out there now. Their devotion to education and documentation is to be commended. BPIB should be a serious collector's first place to search."

Mark Wheatly is a huge fan, too: "BPIB offers the kind of education you should be able to get (but can't) at most art schools for comic and illustration art. Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr. offers lots of knowledge and insight and books. His only bad personality trait is his ability to turn you on to new illustrators you've never heard of before—but will come to love! If you are thinking of buying from BPIB, then relax and trust in their quality and speed of service. It all boils down to three things—great books, great service, good people!"

And so it goes, on and on like that on their website (http://www.bpip.com) with many other testimonials from artists and fans alike. Among the other names who are long-time customers are Walt Simonson, Tom Palmer, Neil Gaiman, Nick Meglin, Charles Vess, Howard Chaykin, John Pound, Mike Zeck, Ken Steacy, Jim Silke, Gary Gianni, Steve Bissette, Mel Odom, Leo and Diane Dillon, Murray Tinkelman, Steve Guarnaccia, Craig Yoe, Tony DiTerlizzi, Dennis Nolan, and plenty more.

"Every artist needs his or her eye candy!" is one of Jim's favorite sayings. After all, that's how artists become artists, and how they get their inspiration.

At one time or another, BPIB has carried and continues to carry virtually every book ever done on comic books and comic strips, along with non-comic volumes with work by comic artists. But there is much more—books by fine illustrators such as Joseph Clement Coll, W. Heath Robinson, Dean Cornwell and Frank Schoonover... volumes by humorists such as Ronald Searle and Virgil Partch... how-to books by the likes of Andrew Loomis and Ernest Watson.

Altogether, the latest *BPIB catalog* (#22, Spring 1999) has 841 items! And this covers only about 20 percent of their stock.

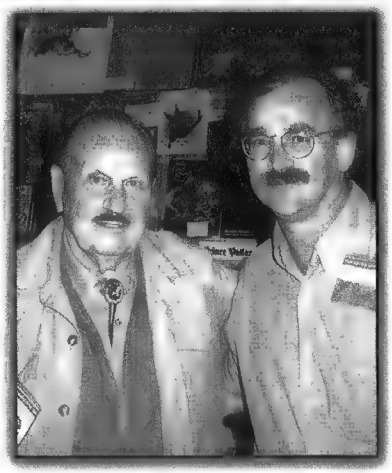
They also carry one of the largest stocks of old comic fanzines and convention programs in the world. If you like *CBM*, you're probably also going to like some of the classic old fanzines. Many of them date to the earliest days of fandom as we know it.

Bud has been a major comic fan since he was a little guy. I can still remember driving him on excursions to buy old comics beginning when he was 14 years old—and when he was already showing the perceptiveness and business acumen of someone much older. He was a sharp comic book grader, though I still treasure my copies of *Crack Comics* #27 (origin of Captain Triumph) and *Hit Comics* #25 (origin of Kid Eternity, with a Blackhawk crossover), both of which I somehow coaxed him to part with in a deal more than 30 years ago. Bud long since has re-acquired both of those Quality gems along with hundreds of others from his favorite Golden Age company.

Jim, on the other hand, didn't start reading comics until he came across *Amazing Spider-Man* #33 (February 1966), when he was a sophomore in college. "I was cutting class one day at Foothill College, and I went by this drugstore that had been off-limits in high school. That's where I found *Spider-Man* #33 (a marvelous issue near the end of Steve Ditko's never-to-be-forgotten run with the character).

Jim was soon hooked, however, and he began hunting down all the back issues of Marvel Comics. It wasn't long before he met Bud and other collectors. Then Jim went back further, to Atlas, then discovered Prize, and St. John, and Lev Gleason, and... well, just about all the old publishers that featured so much good art.

Ironically, Jim's first real source of old comics was the huge second-hand bookstore where I first started to forage for old funnybooks a decade earlier as an 8-year-old in 1956—Twice-Read Books in downtown San Jose. (Jim says that explains why they didn't have many good old ones, but their supply of 1960's Marvels was more than adequate for his needs!)



"I've always been interested right from the start in discovering the structure of an artist's career," says Jim, who loves the likes of Bernie Krigstein, Roy Krenkel, Al Williamson, Frank Frazetta and so many, many others.

Both Jim and Bud have met many of the artists whose works they sell.

"That's one of the best things about the business—meeting the artists," Bud says. "It never stops being fascinating, talking about art."

Every year in San Diego, dozens of artists stop by the Bud Plant Comic Art and Bud Plant Illustrated Books booths to seek out Bud and Jim. If you stand there long enough, a virtual "Who's Who" of the comic art world comes trooping past. (I must admit having kibitzed and eavesdropped more than a couple of times in those hallowed spots!)

At this writing, BPIB has 4,170 books in stock (give or take a few). "Our job is to turn over the darn things"! Jim says.

It's a job that Jim and Bud do well, indeed, along with providing a service to collectors and artists unmatched anywhere in the world.

On occasion of the 50th Nolan's Notebook, allow me to publicly thank two great friends and fellow collectors... Bud Plant and Jim Vadeboncoeur!

Bud and staff at his Grass Valley headquarters back in 1993.

Bud with legendary art instructor and Tarzan artist extraordinaire Burne Hogarth in the mid 1990s.

Michelle Nolan is a nationally recognized collector and researcher of comic books from '40s through the '60s. She has one of the most extensive collections of 1950's comic books in the US.

Lamont Larson UPDATE

The true story of a comic book pedigree!

BY JON BERK

A version of this article originally appeared in *Overstreet's Gold and Silver Quarterly* #6 (October/December 1994). Since that time additional information has been discovered concerning this collection—most notably my acquisition of Joe Tricarichi's "Larson List." Additionally, as discussed below, heretofore unknown "Larson" copies have been discovered. Despite publication of this article, misinformation about this remarkable Golden Age collection still persists. Ye Editor felt that the information was valuable enough that it should be reproduced for the wider *CBM* audience. What follows is the original text, revised and supplemented with some additional information...

I found Lamont Larson!

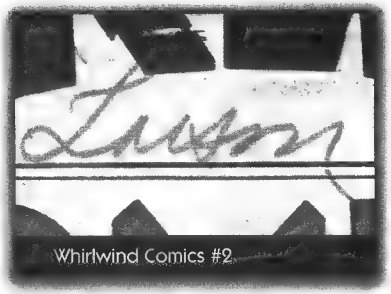
I was going to start off and proclaim that "I had found Lamont Larson!" However, from the perspective of Lamont Larson, he had never been "lost." And, frankly, from my point of view, although I had often wondered about Lamont Larson, I never actively made this a crusade. I mean did I really think I could locate the man, who had amassed, as a boy, over 50 years ago, a collection of Golden Age comics which forms one of the most collectible and recognizable "pedigree" set of comic books in today's marketplace? Well, with some perseverance and a whole lot of luck I "located" Lamont Larson and have had the opportunity to speak with him as to his recollections of reading comics in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

But first, a little background. For reasons which I cannot fully articulate, I have been intrigued by collecting Golden Age comic books known as "Larson" books. The collection, uncovered by Joe Tricarichi in the early 1970s, comprises about 1,000 comic books. Although there are a couple of books from 1935, the bulk of the collection runs from 1936 to September 1941; the heart of the pre-Golden Age and Golden Age. (Please note, except for the "lost Larsons" described below, there are not any Larson copies covered dated after September 1941.)

Although the Larson collection contains many of the early Golden Age keys, notable among the missing key issues is *Detective* #27, *All Star* #3 and *Flash* #1. Notwithstanding these omissions, the collection contains major keys and significant runs of hard core and esoteric Golden Age. Unique to the Larson collection is that it contains several "pre-hero" comic books missing from the Church collection. (For further details please refer to Dr. Pat Kochanek's Ultimate Pedigree series found in *CBM* #2-5.) The collection also contained many big little books, pulps and mystery novels.

As "pedigree" collections go, the Larson collection contains some of the earliest books of any "pedigree" collection. The earliest issues for some pre-Golden Age titles are: *Famous Funnies* #10 (May 1935), *Tip Top* #2 (June 1936), *Funny Pages* #3 (July 1936), *More Fun* #15 (November 1936), *New Comics* #11 (November 1936), *Funny Picture Stories* #1

Crackajack Funnies #13


Whirlwind Comics #2

The many pencil notations on Larson copies can vary in both style and location. (See above and following pages.)

(November 1936), *Detective Picture Stories* #1 (December 1936), *King Comics* #9 (December 1936), *Detective Comics* #3 (May 1937), *New Adventure* #17 (July 1937), and *Feature Funnies* #9 (June 1938).

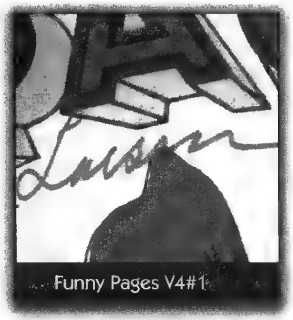
Due to my interest in books from this early time period and Centaur comics, I kept on "bumping" into "Larson" books as the only specimens I could find. Eventually, as my awareness of the Larson collection grew, I took pleasure knowing that these books could be traced back to a single owner. I would search out books from this remarkable collection.

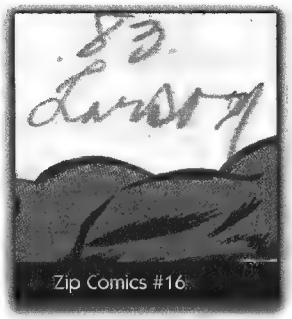
Although the condition of the books is variable a few have been chewed by mice (see *Red Raven* #1), or have water damage or have had coupons clipped out (including *Jungle Comics* #1, *Planet Comics* #1, and *Target Comics* #1—the coupon of these books unfortunately being on the inside of the front cover), many books are in the VF/NM range or better. But whatever the technical grade, most books have outstanding page quality with light to moderate "foxing" due to apparent exposure to moisture. Books from this collection sell for Guide to a premium over Guide for simply being a "Larson copy."

Writing On The Cover? Many "Larsons" are easily identifiable by the name "Larson" prominently written in pencil on the cover. Besides the "flowing cursive" Larson signature (see *Funny Pages* V4#1 and *Whirlwind Comics* #2), many books have a "different" Larson signature (see *Red Raven Comics* #1 and *Zip Comics* #16) or "Lamont" in a different handwriting (see *Thrilling Comics* #8 and *Top-Notch Comics* #18). In many instances, the initial buyers of these books would try to erase the name from the cover—a perceived "defect." Today that "defect" is sought out by the more avid Larson collectors. Some books just have a "number" on the

Creutz Drug Store in Wausa, NE circa early 1940s. (L TO R) Elvera Anderson, Fred J. Creutz, and Cecil A. Coop

Text © Jon Berk 1999


Funny Pages V4#1


Zip Comics #16

Thrilling Comics #8

Top-Notch #18

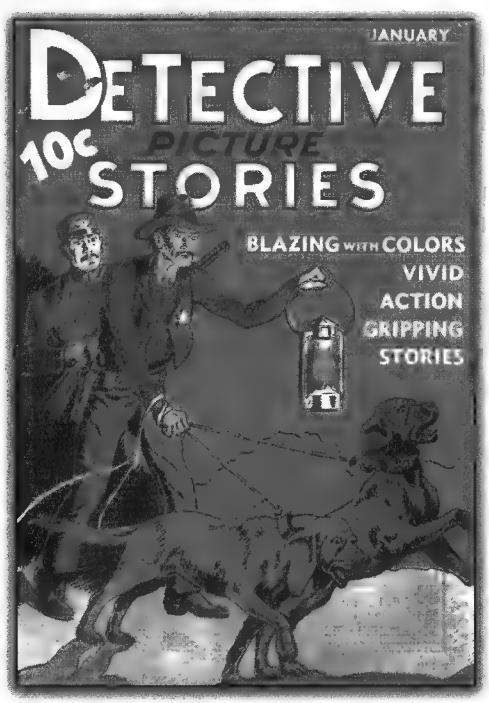
cover, many books have "on" on the cover with the Larson "signature" (see *Popular Comics* #57), or without the Larson "signature" (see *Crackajack Funnies* #13); others have no markings at all. Late issues of the poorly distributed Fox Comics had an "ad" on the cover. (Some collectors have been told that books with just an "L" are Larson copies. This simply is not the case.) The "signature" present or erased is always in the upper left hand quadrant of the book.

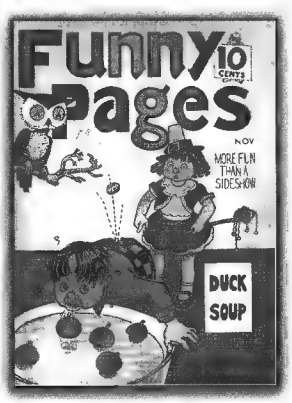
The oldest books from 1936 have "P.N." with a number (see *Detective Picture Stories* #2 and *Funny Pages* #6). Almost all the books have some degree of the distinctive foxing. Unfortunately, due to an early lack of information about these books, unless a particular book has a distinctive identifying mark, many "Larsons" have been assimilated anonymously into the comic book marketplace.

The two oldest books from 1936... Detective Picture Stories #2 (Jan) and Funny Pages #6 (Nov).

(Although not absolutely definitive, the Larson list compiled by Joe Tricarichi is quite helpful. Grading of the books on the list is generally under the more "liberal" grading standards of the 1970s. However, Joe notes some specific defects on books, which is critical to identifying books as Larson copies if the lineage of the book is unknown.)

What draws me to "Larson" copies (beside their generally nice condition) is the knowledge that the books are part of a single identifiable collection. Although not generally of the superior virginal (i.e. "not read") quality of the Church collection, these books were read and accumulated by one person. My interest with Larson books prompted many questions. What is the meaning of the markings on the covers? Why the variation of the "signatures"? Was this the result of a father-son collaboration? What got him going on comics? How old was he? I thought these questions would never be answered. Wrong!





Making Contact I had been offered a book which was a "Larson." Inquiring how the book was identified as a "Larson," I was told that it was from the coupon filled out inside the book (*All Star Comics* #1). Did it give an address? "Wausa, Nebraska." I called telephone information but, alas, no listing for "Lamont Larson." They did have three other listings for "Larson." What the heck, I called the first on the list, and although not a relative, she put me on the path to locate Lamont Larson in Clay Center, Nebraska. Lamont Larson is currently 74 years old and a retired English teacher.

In my initial telephone conversation I spent much time convincing Mr. Larson that I had both feet planted firmly on the ground and that I was genuinely interested in events that had taken place over 50 years ago. He is totally disassociated from the world of comics and had no idea of the prominence of his comic books. After convincing him that I was not crazy, I said, "Ah, you don't know me, but I am interested in comics and, well, you collected them 50 years ago...." He interrupted me at that point and said, "I did not collect them, I read them." This was a refreshing start.

Larson was surprised at my call. He had not given any thought to these books for many years. They were something that formed a part of his childhood, a part that he had let go as his interests turned to mystery novels and model airplanes. Understandably, Larson's recollection of the events of reading comic books as a boy is vague at best. It came as "a very big surprise" for him to learn that his books had such notoriety for comic collectors. He admitted that his initial reaction to this information was that this was all "very strange." As we talked, he warmed and found it "pleasant" as to the place his books hold in collecting circles.

Popular Comics #57

Red Raven #1

Det. Picture Stories #2

Funny Pages #6

Lamont Larson grew up in Wausa, Nebraska, a small farming town in northeast Nebraska about 150 miles from Omaha. (Actually "Lamont" is his middle name. Growing up in the late 1930s he was not fond of the phonetic sameness of his first name "Rudolph" with a certain German leader of that time.) The town population was about 700. His family ran the local movie theater. As a boy Larson described himself as an "avid reader." He read comics from about the age of 9 through the age of 15.

As he told me, "I always liked comics in the daily and particularly in the Sunday paper. As they came up with comic books, I began to prize and enjoy them." (Remember the "modern" comic book only hit the newsstands in 1934, with original material beginning in 1935-36.) He did not buy to "collect" comics, but rather, as Larson stated, "to read and enjoy them." He stated that he always enjoyed the comics in the newspaper. Comic books represented "a step beyond that. I was developing a desire to read and I liked the high adventure that you got in some of those comics."

Creutz' Drugstore Larson would purchase the comics at Creutz' Drugstore. Because Larson missed some issues as they came out, the owner of the drugstore, Fred Creutz, suggested that he put aside all comics that came in and have Larson pick them up periodically. As Larson recalls Fred Creutz said, "Well, I tell you what. We'll put them away and put your name on them… and when you want to come in and get them, they'll be here."

Larson accepted this arrangement. Tryg Hagen and Cecil Coop, employees at different times at the drugstore, were primarily responsible for placing Larson's name on the books which were put aside for him. It is their handwriting, not Larson's, that appears on the books. (This information explains the variation in the handwriting for "Larson" or "Lamont" appearing on the books, and puts to an end one of the small mysteries about the books.) This arrangement probably started some time in 1939—Larson would have been 12—as I am not aware of any "signed" Larsons before this date. (In fact, based on review of my "Larson" books it appears this arrangement started with books cover dated July 1939.)

Interestingly, his name did not appear on all titles on a consistent basis until those cover dated January 1940. This may also explain some of the gaps in the early runs. Additionally, as indicated below, it appears that certain gaps are explained by the fact that he gave some of his books away.) All comics were purchased new; no second-hand comics were purchased to fill gaps.

Mr. Larson had no explanation for the numbers written on the books, or the "P.N." or the "on" written on the books, except to state that many of the magazines sold at the drugstore, whether comics or not, would have the notation "on." To answer these questions, Larson put me in contact with Norman and Bob Creutz, the sons of the drugstore owner. (Creutz' Drugstore has been in continuous operation and run by the same family since 1895.)

"P.N." and "on" They stated that the initials identified the distributor of the books in order to make returns. "P.N." stood for "Publishers News" and "on" stood for "Omaha News." They also were able to identify who wrote Larson's name on the books. The flowing cursive "Larson" and "Lamont" as appears on *Funny Pages* V4#1 and *Whirlwind Comics*, respectively, was written by Tryg Hagen while the handwriting for "Larson" as it appears on *Red Raven Comics* and *Zip* #16 was written by Cecil Coop (who helped out at the drugstore after Hagen died in 1940).

As to the numbers on some of the covers, the answer is less clear. Norman Creutz believes it is a "call back" number by which the distributor identified books that were then ready to be returned. The retail outlet would then tear off the covers and return these books for credit. Creutz believes this was the procedure for Publishers News. (Apparently after 1937 only Omaha News would be specifically indicated by a symbol on the cover.) In support of this theory it is noted that numbers do not appear on any book that has the "on" (Omaha News) symbol. This supposition of Creutz appears to be correct in that the number for the Larson titles that do have numbers are all the same.

Both employees at Creutz' drugstore, Tryg Hagen (shown here in the late 1930s) and Cecil Coop penciled Lamont's name on numerous comic covers.

Larson's parents would pay for the comics. They had no problem with him reading them. Larson stated that his parents viewed it as a cheap way "to keep me out of trouble." He started reading them at the end of the Depression. As he reflected, "They were only a dime so it really wasn't a big thing, although, sometimes, that dime was kinda hard to come by." Although many of the books in the Larson collection were

"reprint" books, Larson confided that he did not like these "funny books," preferring "high adventure," "far out," and "fantastic" stories. His favorite characters read like a who's who of the Golden Age: Capt. America, Capt. Marvel, Superman, and, his favorite, Batman. (Interestingly, his CB [citizen's band radio] "handle" was "The Shadow" due to the shared name "Lamont.") He also had a tremendous interest in Dick Tracy both in comic books and Big Little Books which he also adored.

Floor of the Barn Larson stated he was always careful about things he owned. Generally, he would put the comics away after he read them, although he acknowledged that some might have been thrown away. (This further explains the gaps that appear in many of the collected series). Initially, the books were in a box in a storeroom, but when his family moved in 1940 they were stored in a barn. This outdoor storage explains the mice chews on some books and the exposure to moisture (resulting in foxing) present on many copies.

(This "storage method" of subjecting books to the extremes of the Nebraskan weather while sitting of the floor of a barn in a cardboard box and yet maintaining white pages is remarkable considering the elaborate procedures advocated by "experts" on how to properly preserve one's collection.)

Larson has no specific recollection of why he stopped reading comics, except to note that he had become interested in other things, such as mystery novels and anything to do with aviation. In fact, later in life he started to collect hardback and paperback mystery novels.

Larson obtained a job as a teacher and moved away from Wausa leaving the comics in the barn. In the late 1970s, a local antique dealer, Dwaine Nelson, asked Larson's mother (for whom he did odd jobs) about the books and an arrangement was made. Larson was surprised that they had been saved. Mrs. Larson who was anxious to remove the material in the barn sold Nelson the comics and many magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Colliers*. Nelson had the books for about 18 months before he resold them. Nelson (with whom I spoke) recollected that he sold the comics and magazines for about $50 to $100. They eventually found their way into the hands of Joe Tricarichi.

As one looks back, it was the thousands and thousands of kids who, like Lamont Larson, latching on to this new form of entertainment, catapulted the nascent comic book business into the thriving business it would be. And out of those thousands and thousands of books only a few survived through

The Larson Collection Checklist

Recent sold that did not be removed (censored) from a list compiled by the Larson's and sent to Joe Dan. The list is incorrect with accurate issues followed by an * are no copies Joe Landon's checklist is incorrect in Jun #26 & 1944 Nedor's publication of his first article for the Eagle

Ace 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 49, 50, 51

Action 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39

Adventure 17, 18, 19, 21, 30, 33, 35, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63

All-American 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

All Flash 1

All Star 1, 4, 5, 6

Amazing Adventure Funnies 1

Amazing Man 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 21, 22

Amazing Mystery Funnies 1, 2, 3, 1981, V1#2, V1#3, V1#4, V1#5, V1#6, V1#7, V1#8, V1#9, V1#10, 015, 019, 020, 021, 022, 023

Arrow 1

Barney Baxter (Feature Book) 15

Batman 1, 4, 5, 6

Big Shot 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 13, 16, 17

Big Three 3, 4

Blue Beetle 1, 2, 3, 6

Blue Bolt 1, 2, 3, 4, V2#1

Blue Ribbon 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Bronco Bill (Large Series) 19

Bulletman 1

Captain America 1, 2, 3, 5

Captain Fearless 1

Captain Marvel 1, 2

Catman 1, 2, 3

Champion/Champ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15

Circus 1, 2

Comics, The 1, 9, 10, 11

Comics on Parade 1, 3, 5, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98

Comic Pages V1#5

Cowboy 13, 16

Crack 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14

Crackajack Funnies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

Crash 1, 2

Cyclone 1, 2, 3

Danny Dingle (Single Series) 17

Daredevil 1, 2, 3

Daring Mystery 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

Detective 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 30, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 49, 50, 51

Detective Picture Funnies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Dick Tracy (Four Color) 11, 20, 1, 4, 6, 8, 11

Don Winslow 9, 11

Drums of Doom 1

Ella Cinders (Single Series) 21

Exciting 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Famous Feature Stories 1 (two copies)

Famous Funnies 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 22, 24, 27, 30, 31, 37, 38, 45, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83

Fantastic 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15

Funtoman 9

Feature Funnies 9, 10, 13, 15, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34(?), 36, 37, 43, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47

Fight 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14

Flame 1, 4, 5, 6

Flash 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

Flash Gordon (Feature Book) 25

Frankie Doodle (Large Series) 7

Fringe Ollie (Large Series) 5

Funnies, The 1, 8, 11, 14, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59

Funny Pages V1#1, V1#5, V1#7, V1#8, V1#11, V1#9, V1#10, V1#12, V1#1, V1#3, V1#4, V1#5, V1#7, V1#8, V1#9, V1#1, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41

Funny Picture Stories 1, 2, 3, V1#1

Future 1

Gag 1

Gangbusters (Single Series) 19

Green Hornet 2, 3, 4, 5

Green Mask 1, 4, 5

Heroic 1, 5, 6, V1#6

Hit 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

How It Began (Single Series) 15

the years to be snapped up by anxious collectors today. Who would have thought that one of the most prominent collections of comic books would survive to this date, due to the idea of the owner of a drugstore in a small Nebraskan town and a boy who took good care of what he owned?

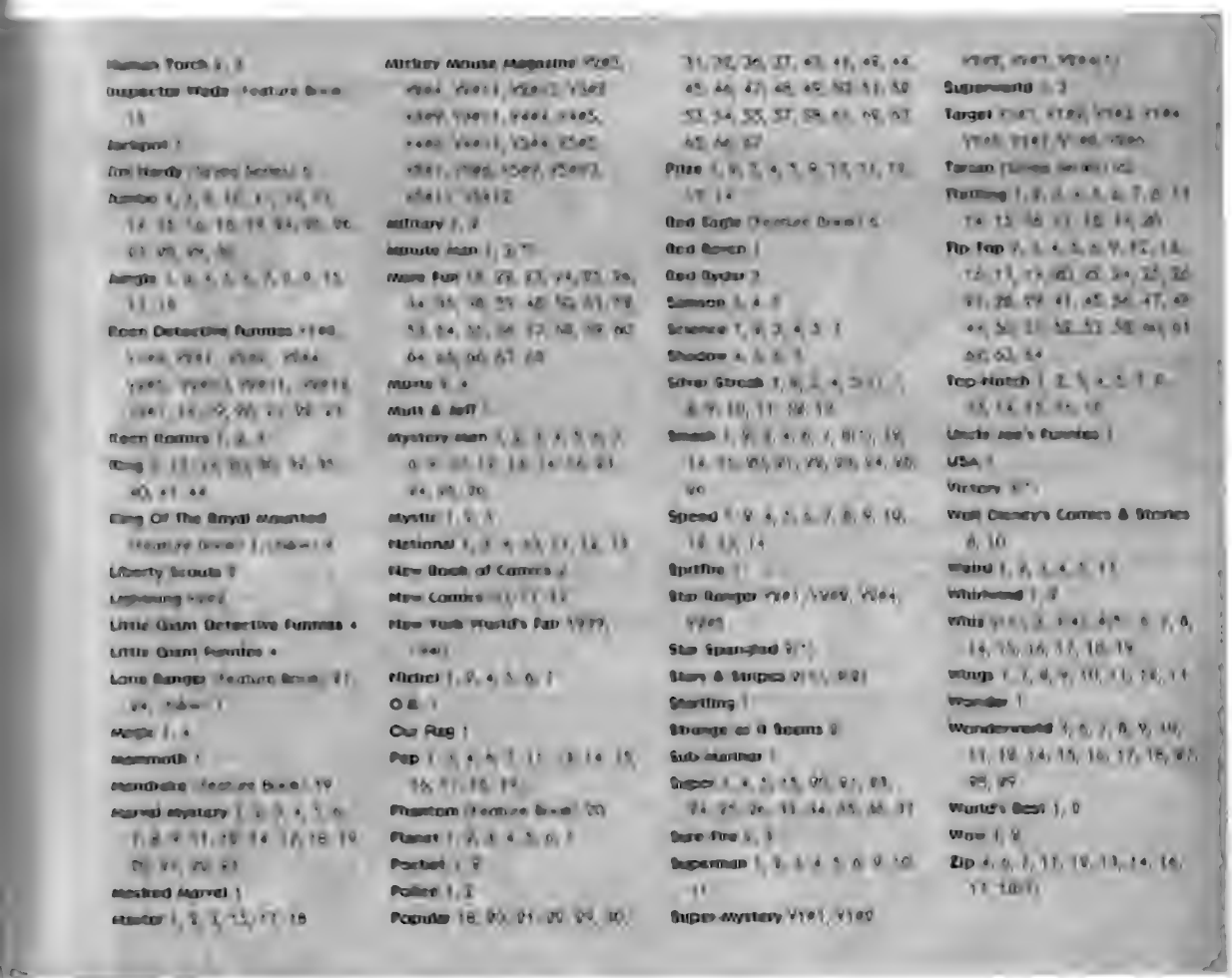
Epilogue After my article came out in late 1994, Larson's hometown newspaper in Nebraska asked if they could reprint it. I naturally gave my permission. About two weeks after the newspaper articles appeared, I received a letter from a boyhood friend of Larson's. (Larson had even been his best man.) He had read with much interest my articles. It prompted an old memory. Recently, he had cleaned out his mother's house and discovered a box of his old comics. He remembered as a boy that Larson had given him comics after he was done with them. Sure enough he found six books with "Lamont" or "Larson" on them. He "wondered" if I "might" be interested in them. MIGHT BE!

As described, none of the books sounded like they were in particularly good condition. However, driven by curiosity and this incredible quirk of luck that these books even existed, I dickered over a price and purchased the books. These books are, for the record, *Smash Comics* #8 (March 1940), *Feature Comics* #34 (July 1940), *Minute Man Comics* #2 (September 5-December 5, 1941), *Super Mystery* V2#4 (October 1941), *Victory Comics* #3 (November 1941), and *Star Spangled Comics* #2 (November 1941).

As testament to the uniqueness of the storage condition of the original collection, the "lost Larsons" are of variable condition with none grading better than VG+ and none displaying the page whiteness of the original collection.

These "lost Larsons" prompt several thoughts and observations. There are, obviously, "Larsons" that were purchased after the September 1941 cover date. However, it is clear that at this point Larson lost interest. Of the six "lost Larsons" four are from the very end of his comic reading career. The fact that he gave away the books is evidence of that. He may have been more willing to part with his comic books at this point. However, since two of the books are from 1940, the "gaps" in the Larson collection may be attributed as much to the common boyhood trait of sharing books as to the possible distribution quirks of the comic books themselves. The more intriguing question is if Larson gave away any other books. Are there more "lost Larsons" out there waiting to be found?

Only time will tell.



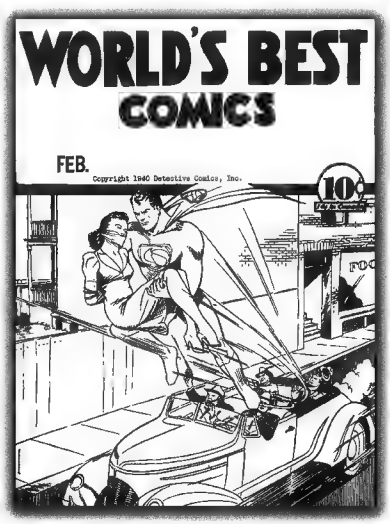
ABSOLUTELY AMAZING DC ASHCANS

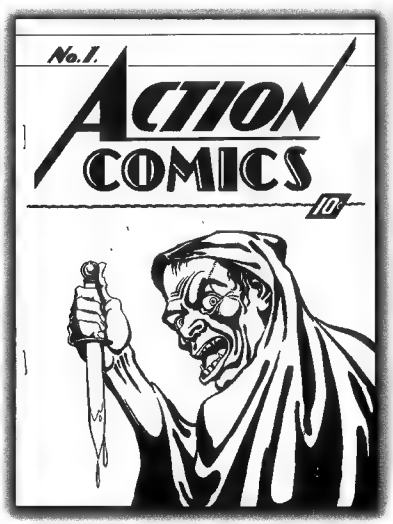
By Gary Colabuono

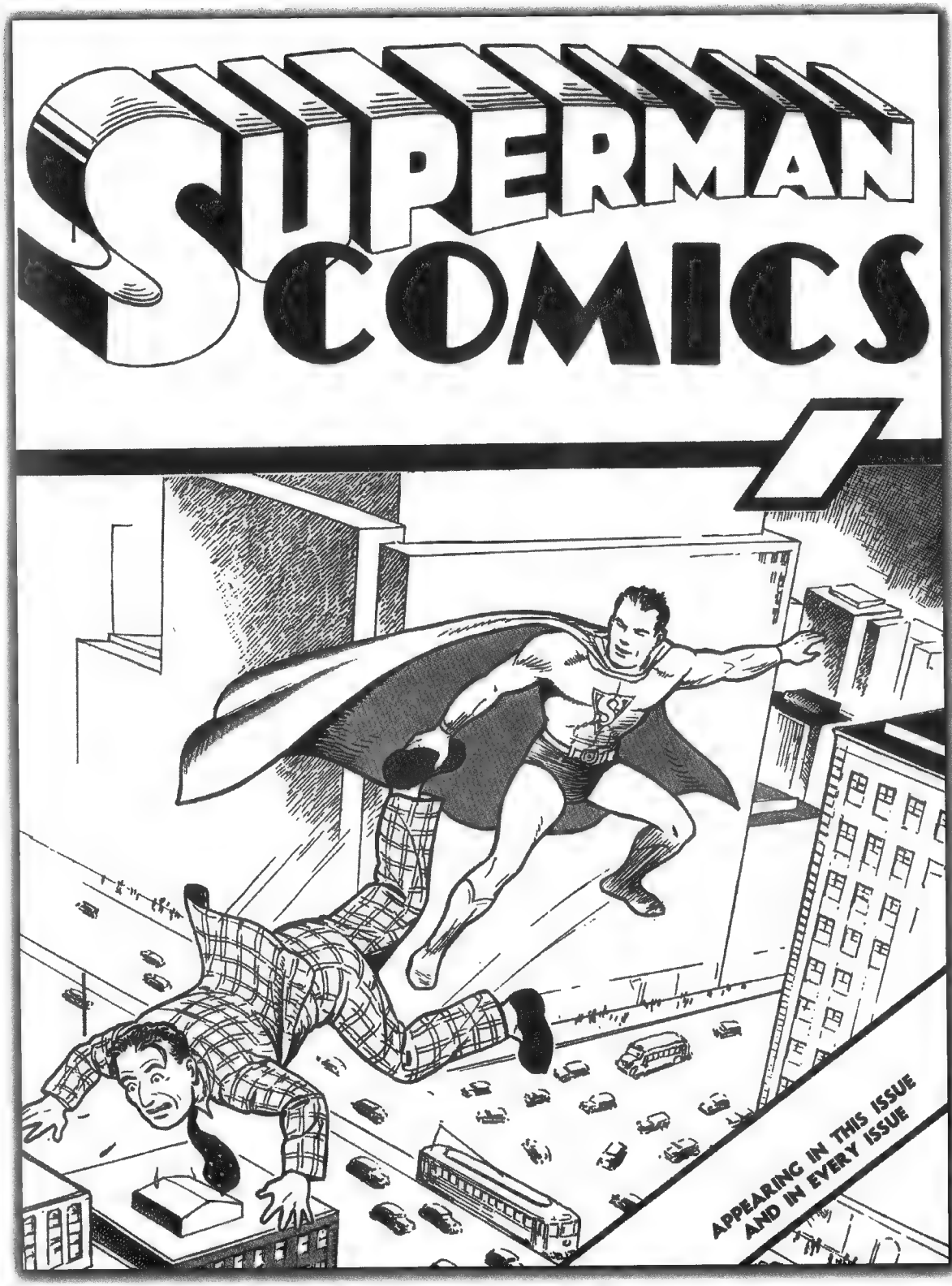
Back in 1975, the first guy I met when I was started dealing in comics was Joe Desris. Now, you may know Joe today as "the guy who collects Batman." He's written books, been interviewed countless times by radio and TV, and is genuinely considered THE authority on Batman collectibles. But back in 1975 he was just a guy I ran into in the parking lot of the old YMCA on Wabash St. in Chicago.

I traveled to the Y early on that fall Sunday to attend my first meeting of the Old Comic Book Club of Illinois. I had no idea what to expect, but I did have a trunk full of 1950's comics I had just acquired and had heard that this was the place in Chicago to set up. As I was walking through the parking lot to the building (eyeing the lines of homeless men waiting for breakfast at the missions across the street, being careful not to trip over any unconscious drunks, and keeping an eye out for muggers), I ran into a rather large man with a boyish face and a friendly smile who I engaged in small talk on whether I was in the right place or not. I explained that I had a trunk full of comics and did he think I would have any luck selling them here.

Joe said, "Where's this trunk? I'd like to see what you have. I buy






SUPERMAN
COMICS
7
APPEARING IN THIS ISSUE
AND IN EVERY ISSUE
ALL SUPERMAN ART, CHARACTERS, & LOGOS © 1998 DC

DC Ashcans Checklist

KEY:
[C] - interiors are complete comics
[P] - interiors are partial copies.
[PS] - contain only a particular story or stories that feature a specific character
[HS-HT] - hand-stapled and hand-trimmed
[HS-UT] - hand-stapled but untrimmed or just partially trimmed
[MST] - mechanically "stitched and trimmed" (stapled and trimmed) like a regular comic book
[NN] - No number known

ACTION COMICS #1
(No Date)
Cover: Rejected cover art to Detective #2 [HS-HT]
Interior: Detective #1 [P]
Known Copies: 3 (Colabuono-1, DC-1, Others-1)
Notes: Only known ashcan with original cover art

ACTION FUNNIES (NN)
(No Date)
Cover: Action #3 [HS-HT]
Interior: Detective #10 [P]
Known Copies: 3 (Colabuono-2, Others-1)

ALL-AMERICAN COMICS (NN)
Apr 1939
Cover: Adventure #33 [MST]
Interior: Detective #23 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

ALL-AMERICAN MEN OF WAR (NN)
Aug/Sep 1952
Cover: All Star Western #58 [HS-UT]
Interior: Mr. District Attorney #21 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

ALL STAR COMICS #1
Spring 1940
Cover: Flash #1 [MST]
Interior: Detective #37 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

ANIMAL ANTICS (NN)
Feb 1946
Cover: Star Spangled #49 [HS-UT]
Interior: Boy Commandos #12 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Notes: More than 10 loose covers also exist

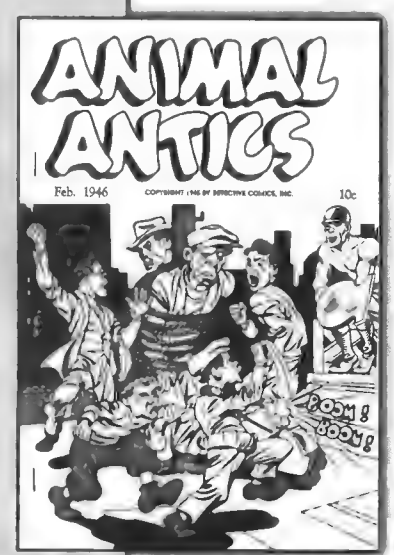
BOY COMMANDOS COMICS #1
Sept/Oct 1942
Cover: Splash page from Boy Commandos story in Detective #68 [HS-HT]
Interior: Boy Commandos story only from Detective #? [PS]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Notes: Only known ashcan cover reproduced from a splash page. And only ashcan title to have one numbered and the others not numbered

BOY COMMANDOS COMICS (NN)
Sep/Oct 1942
Cover: Splash page from Boy Commandos story in Detective #68 [HS-UT]
Interior: Detective #68 [C]
Known Copies: 5 (Colabuono-1, DC-4)
Notes: Only known ashcan cover reproduced from a splash page

☛ *Continued on page 30*

comics." My reply was, "There's no trunk. They're in the trunk of my car." So we walked over to where I was parked. I opened the trunk and there were 3,000 comics in egg crates, stacked neatly and in order. No bags. No boards. No Mylar. *Uncle Scrooge* #386, 456, 495. *Danger Is Our Business* #1. *Mickey Mouses, Tom and Jerrys, Tarzans, Lone Rangers*, and a perfect copy of *Showcase* #22.

After eyeing this load, Joe said, "How much do you want for them?" Since I didn't know what they were worth, I just said $10,000. It seemed high, but it was a figure I'd accept. Joe just smiled and shook his head. "Sorry, too steep for me. Good luck inside."

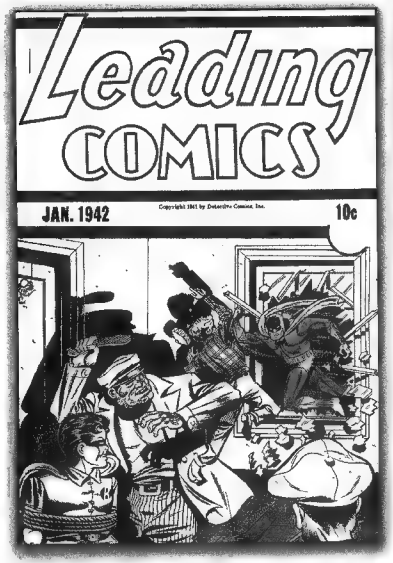


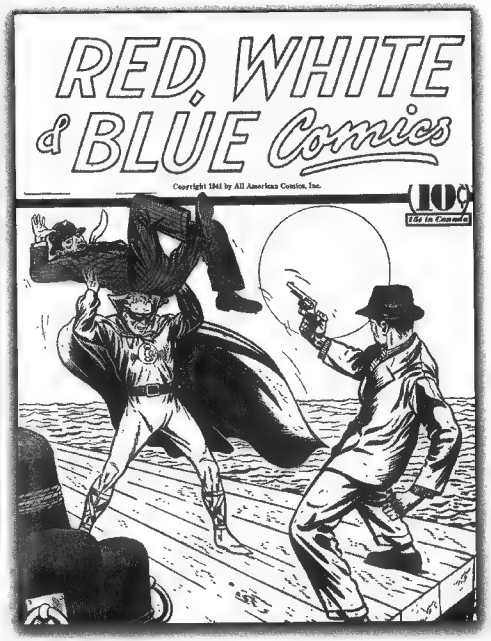
Now let's fast forward ten years to 1985. It's another overcast Sunday morning in October. The Bears were playing on Monday night, so Larry Charet, promoter (and later my partner) of the Chicago Comicon, scheduled his quarterly Minicon on this Sunday so it wouldn't compete with the Bears. There's a nice crowd and I'm now the largest dealer set up in this rather smallish room at the Americana Congress Hotel on South Michigan Avenue. Ironically we're only a few short blocks from where the now razed Wabash YMCA once stood, but there are no drunks,

homeless folks, or muggers on this prime strip of world-class real estate.

I remember selling a *Weird Science-Fantasy* #29 that morning. High grade. My favorite comic book cover of all time. It was just about time for lunch when my old friend, Joe Desris, approached my table. "Gary, I have something to show you. I think you'll be interested." Now, that line is one I've never been able to resist. Hunger pangs or not, I had to see what Joe had. He handed me a stiff manila envelope and when I looked inside I spied six comic books. But what six they were!

"Joe, are these reprints? Did Alan Light put these out? I thought his covers were in color." They looked like reprints, they had black and white covers, but there was no doubt they were old. They had the texture, feel and scent of vintage Golden Age comics. And then I heard for the first time what they were. "These are ashcans, Gary. DC published these to secure trademarks for their Golden Age titles." Joe went on, "I'm doing some research on Superman and Batman licenses issued in the late 1930s and I was interviewing Sol Harrison at his home in Florida and he showed me these. They're from his personal files. Are these cool or what?"

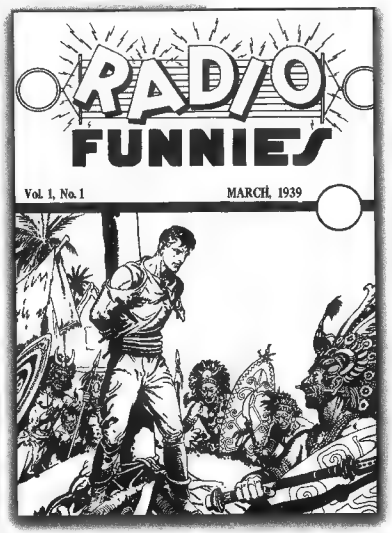




Action Funnies? What was that? A precursor to *Action? Red, White and Blue Comics*? It had the cover to *All-American* #20, but I'd never heard of that title. I knew there was a back up feature in a few issues of *All-American* with that name, but this was obviously something completely different.

Radio Funnies? What a great logo! What looked to be an

Ashcans use cover art from other comics... Leading uses Detective #57; All-American uses Flash #17; Red, White & Blue uses All-Am. #20; and Radio Funnies uses Adv. #39.



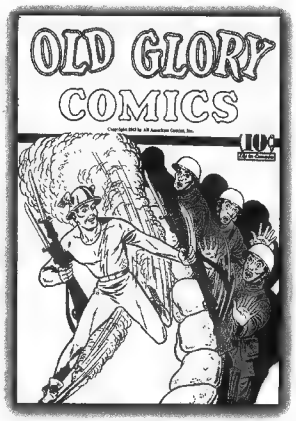
DC Ashcans

old-time tabletop radio emitting waves of sound. With a cover from an old *Adventure*. *Old Glory Comics*? There's the Flash but why is he in this title… Copyright 1941?

What a crazy-quilt collection of comics! I felt like I had somehow crossed over to an alternate universe where I was looking at comics that would confound both Jay Garrick and Barry Allen!

And then I saw two books that made me shudder. I didn't realize it at the time but I was holding two of the most important pop culture artifacts in the world. Gently, oh so gingerly, with the utmost reverence, I carefully held and examined the first editions (literally!) of *Superman* and *Wonder Woman*.

I may not have have recognized the titles of those other books that DC registered but never published… but these were two different. I was still attracted to the delicious weirdness and unrealized potential of the other strange titles that had never seen America's newsstands as ongoing titles, but the characters in these two books are special… and arguably define the comic book art form for millions around the world. "Well, what do you think?" asked Joe, knowing that he had something important but had not yet been able to assess their demand or value. "Are they for sale?" I queried, trying not to look too anxious. "Well, I don't own them, Sol does. He asked me to act as his agent and see what I can get for them. He does want to sell them though, so he told me I should take any good offer."



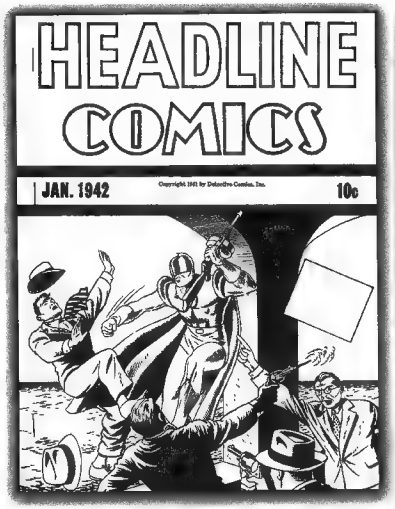
The ashcan for the never-published title Old Glory Comics recycles the cover art used on Flash Comics #12 originally published Dec. 1940.

The ashcan for Flash Comics reused cover art from Adventure Comics #41, originally published Aug. 1939.

My mind started to wander back ten years to that parking lot at the YMCA and two guys negotiating to buy comics. I said, "How much do you want for them?" Since Joe didn't know what they were worth, he said, "How about $10,000?" It seemed high he admitted, but it was an amount that he thought Sol would accept. But unlike a reluctant Joe from ten years earlier, I just smiled and wrote out the check.

Recounting the events of that Sunday in 1985 is something I've always reveled in. I really didn't know what I was buying, but I knew these ashcans were important. The provenance was indisputable. Sol Harrison worked his way up from production assistant at DC in 1941 to president of the company in 1976. He was recognized as an innovator and visionary in the field of comic book production and is credited with giving DC its

crisp, sharp look from the 1940s through the 1960s. (It's a little known fact, but for 15 years Sol actually did all the color separations himself!) His inventiveness and creativity led him to experiment with halftones and photography, and that resulted in DC's "painted" or "gray-tone" covers that are treasured by collectors today.



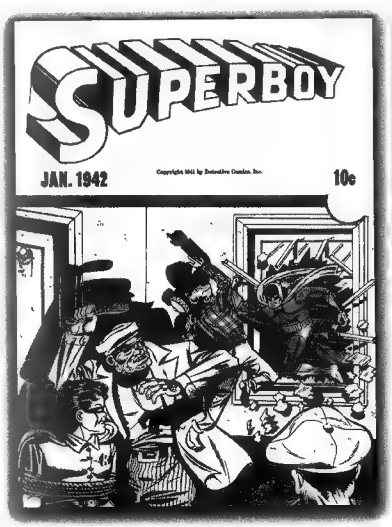
And Harrison didn't just work at DC. Incredibly, he did the color separations for *Famous Funnies* A *Carnival of Comics* in 1933… at the age of 16!

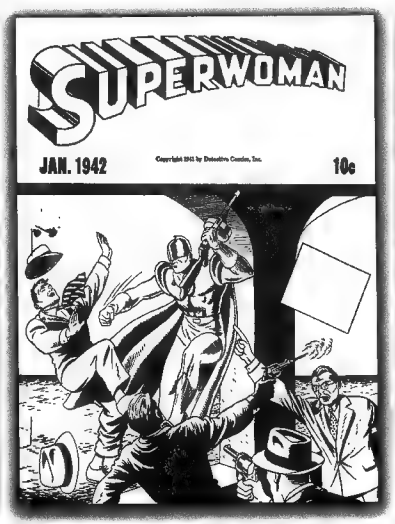
So if these came from the retired president of DC, they had to have some importance. But why were they created in the first place? And why didn't other publishers create ashcans? Sure, there are Fawcett ashcans we're all pretty familiar with: *Thrill*, and *Flash* and a few others, and there are known copies of *Champion, Cyclone* and *KO*, but no other publisher came close to the output of DC.

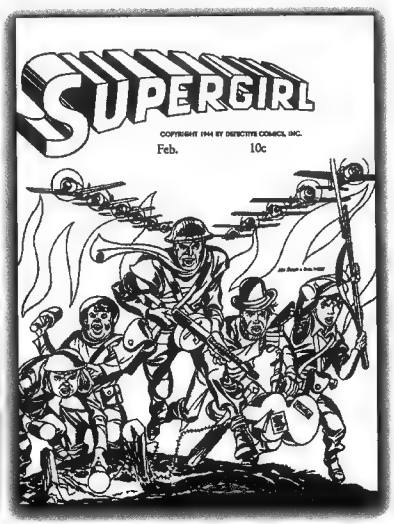
Paul Levitz (currently executive vice president and publisher of DC), surmises that the reason DC was so prolific in producing ashcans back in the early days of comics is because of

One of the most important ashcans in comic book history… Wonder Woman #1!

Who knew that Superboy, Superwoman, and Supergirl were created during the Golden Age?







COMMANDOS #1
Oct 1942
Cover: Boy Commandos #1 [HS-HT]
Interior: Boy Commandos story from Detective #? [PS]
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-2, DC also has 1 loose cover)

DOUBLE ACTION COMICS #2
Jan 1940
Cover: Adventure #37
Interior: Black & white compilation of pre-hero DC material including two Siegel and Schuster Dr. Occult stories "Vampire Venom" and "The Spectral Killer"
Known Copies: 2 (Others-2, cvrs only Colab -1, DC-1, others-?)
Notes: *Overstreet* suggests that *Double Action Comics* #1 exists as an ashcan or cover, but neither DC nor I have seen a copy so I cannot confirm this.

FEDERAL MEN COMICS (NN?)
????, 1936
Cover: ???? [??]
Interior: Probably New Comics #5 [??]
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

FLASH COMICS #1
Dec 1939
Cover: Adventure #41 [MST]
Interior: All-American #8 [P]
Known Copies: 6 (Colabuono-2, Others-4)
Notes: More copies of this ashcan exist in private collections than any other

FUNNY FOLKS (NN?)
Feb 1946
Cover: ???? [??]
Interior: Funny Stuff #2 [??]
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

GIRL'S LOVE STORIES (NN)
Aug/Sep 1949
Cover: Buzzy #? [HS-UT]
Interior: Date With Judy #10 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

HEADLINE COMICS (NN)
Jan 1942
Cover: More Fun #73 [HS-HT]
Interior: Star Spangled #2 [P]
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, DC-1)

HERE'S HOWIE (NN)
Jan/Feb 1951
Cover: Buzzy #? [HS-UT]
Interior: Buzzy #42 [C]
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, DC-1)

HOUSE OF MYSTERY (NN)
Dec/Jan 1951
Cover: Danger Trail #3 [HS-UT]
Interior: Star Spangled #109 [C]
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, DC-1)
Notes: See letter from Herb Seagal, DC's accountant, to an out-of-state friend

LEADING COMICS (NN) Jan 1942
Cover: Detective #57 [HS-HT]
Interior: Star Spangled #2 [P]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono; DC has 2 loose covers)

MOVIE CARTOONS (NN) Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

MOVIE FABLES (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

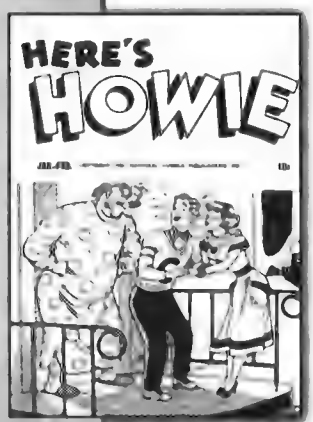
MOVIE GEMS (NN) Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

☛ *continued on page 54*

DC Ashcans

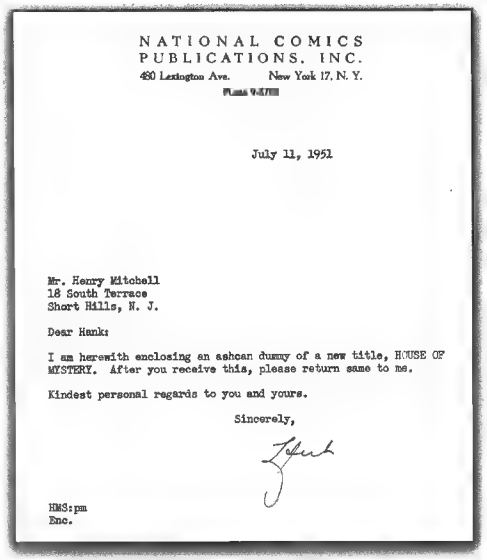
Harry Donenfeld's background in magazine publishing, printing, and distribution. Donenfeld probably was taught to be extra careful when it came to securing trademarked titles. Donenfeld is responsible for convincing Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson to publish *Detective Comics*. After buying out Wheeler-Nicholson's interests in DC in 1937, Donenfeld went on to run the business and distribution arms of DC. It was during these formative years that DC produced the bulk of their ashcans. Levitz also believes that the Fox/Wonderman lawsuit (which DC won) further cemented the ashcan mentality at DC.

Levitz also pointed out another significant concept regarding ashcans. It's important to note that ashcans were not produced to secure copyrights for specific characters. Instead, they were published to secure trademarks for titles and logos only!



(Back in the 1930s there was no "attempt to use" law in place regarding trademarks. Today, all one has to do to secure a trademark is to register with the trademark office a likeness of the logo and a description of the product and an "attempt to use" by a certain date.)

So in the 1930s and 1940s a publisher had to show that a complete product existed in order to secure a trademark. Since securing copyrights for characters were obtained in another manner, the editorial content of ashcans wasn't as important as



NATIONAL COMICS
PUBLICATIONS, INC.
480 Lexington Ave. New York 17, N. Y.
Plaza 9-5700

July 11, 1951

Mr. Henry Mitchell
18 South Terrace
Short Hills, N. J.

Dear Hank:

I am herewith enclosing an ashcan dummy of a new title, HOUSE OF MYSTERY. After you receive this, please return same to me.

Kindest personal regards to you and yours.

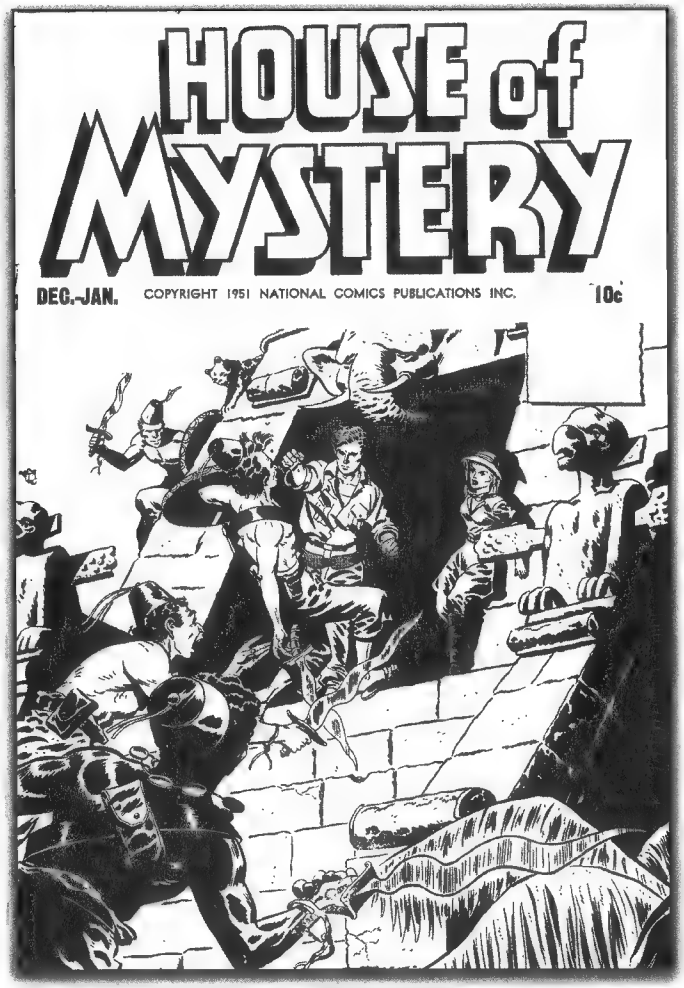
Sincerely,

HMS:pm
Enc.

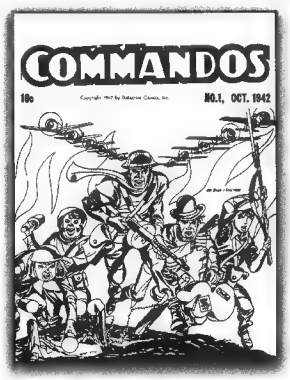
the title and logo. That's why there's such an eclectic mix of characters appearing on ashcan covers with no apparent connection to the title.

It's also important to point out that Golden Age DC ashcans were produced on velox paper, not newsprint or office paper. Copy machines didn't exist in the 1930s, so to produce multiple copies of an ashcan cover, DC created a logo and made copies using the same camera they used to shoot completed comic book pages. Velox paper is a photographic paper used by most publishers and printers. It produces an extremely clear and sharp black and white image. Because DC ashcans were produced on 50-60 year-old velox paper, it's virtually impossible to counterfeit them.

So we know who made them, and why and how they were made. But just how important are these ashcan editions? Before there was a commercially produced copy of *Action Comics*, DC made three or four copies of the *Action Comics* ashcan. Before



Apparently DC admired the cover of Danger Trail #3 as much as we collectors... they used it on both the Myst. Trail & House of Mystery ashcans.



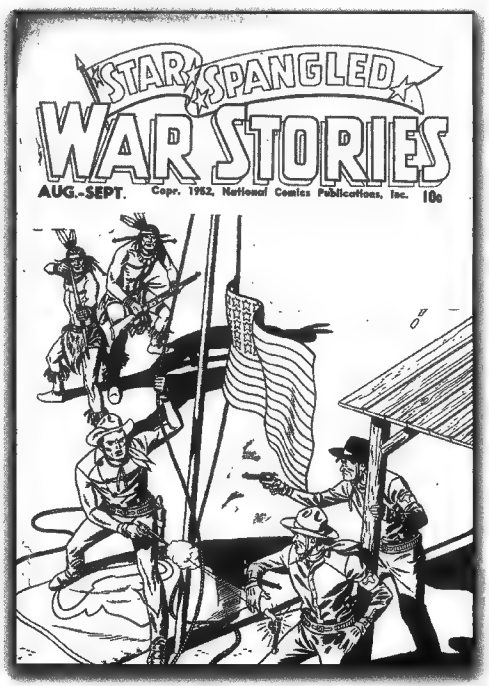
DC made the cover art for Boy Commandos #1 go a long way... among other ashcans, it was used to secure the title rights for numerous permutations of "Screen" and "Movie" titles.

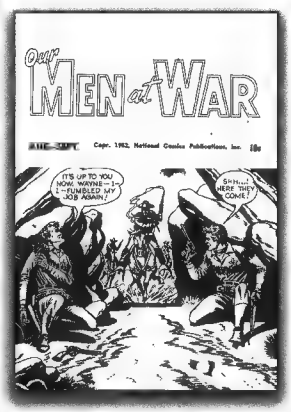
there was a *Superman Comics* produced for the newsstand, they made two or three copies of the *Superman Comics* ashcan. They sent a copy to the trademark office and filed the others away in case they were needed later to fight a lawsuit.

By this definition, these are the rarest comic books in existence. And the most important. Consider that *Superman* launched an industry that has thrived for 60 years and has provided millions of persons around the world with unlimited entertainment. And the first time the words "Superman Comics" appeared anywhere was on the cover of that ashcan.

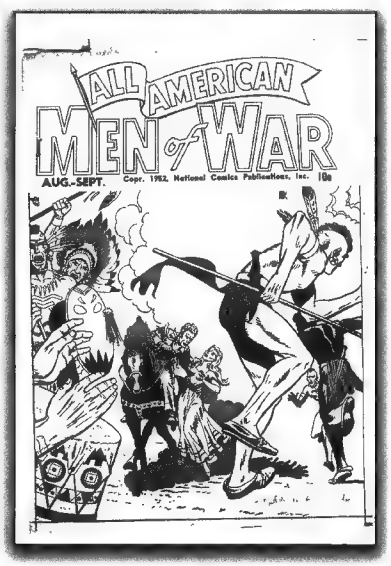
I've taken my responsibility of safeguarding these artifacts for future generations very seriously over the years. Just recently I've found the time to devote to this project of identifying and archiving my ashcans.

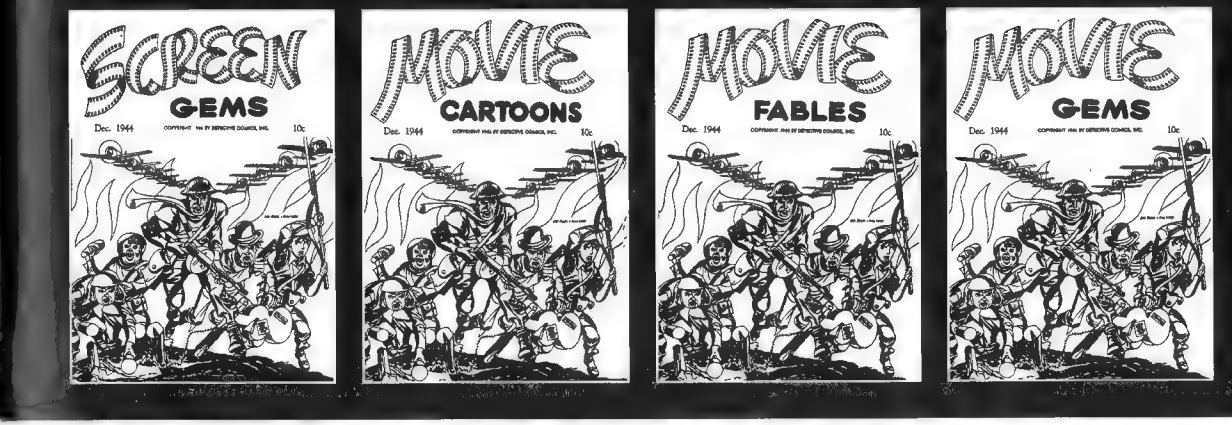
A few friends have had the good fortune to accompany me to the bank vault where my ashcans are stored. After seeing them all in one place and having the chance to hold and inspect them, they've remarked that it's an almost religious experience.





The ashcan for Our Men At War has fueled speculation that DC may not have originally planned to convert All-American to a war title.



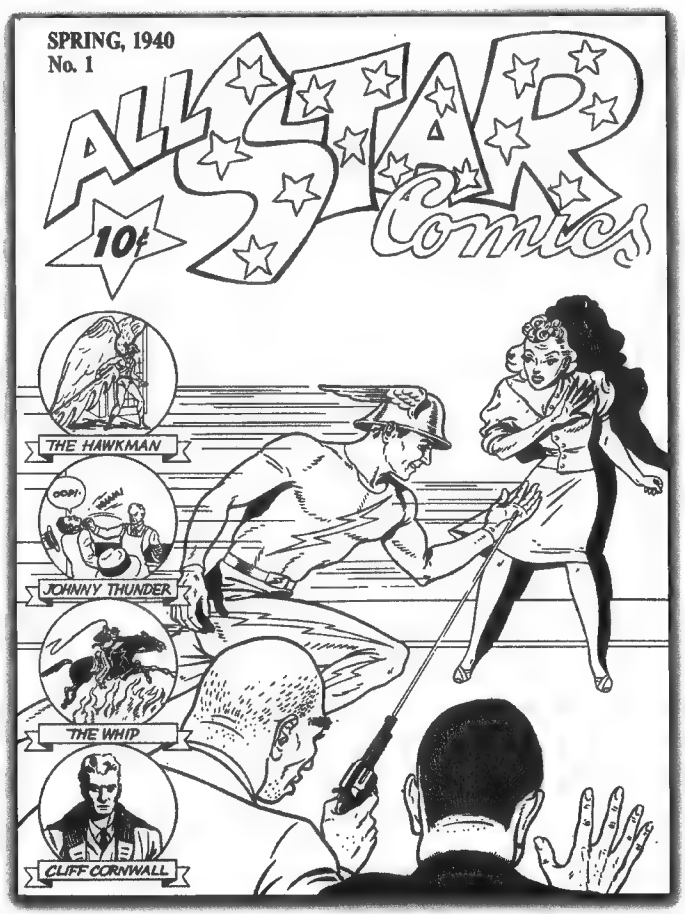


Hyperbole aside, I'm sure you can see why these comic books rightfully deserve their place in history.

Most interiors are complete comics [C], others are partial [P] copies. Some of these partial interiors are missing multiple centerfolds that reduce the page count from 64 to 32. Still others contain only a particular story or stories [PS] that feature a specific character. For instance, *Superman Comics* contains just the Superman story from *Action* #8.

Most DC ashcans are hand-stapled and hand-trimmed [HS-HT]. Some are hand-stapled but untrimmed [HS-UT] or just partially trimmed. And some are mechanically "stitched and trimmed" (stapled and trimmed) [MST] like a regular comic book. The stitched and trimmed ashcans generally have an aesthetically superior look compared to the hand-stapled ones since they really look like a regular production comic book, except with a black and white cover. But conversely the hand-stapled ashcans have a delightful "homemade" feel that connotes a true sense of rarity and historical importance.

I own at least one copy of all the known DC ashcans that exist in private collections except for *Supergirl* and *Superman... Superhombre*. Those two are owned by Charles Costas, a collector who acquired them from a relative who worked at DC in the



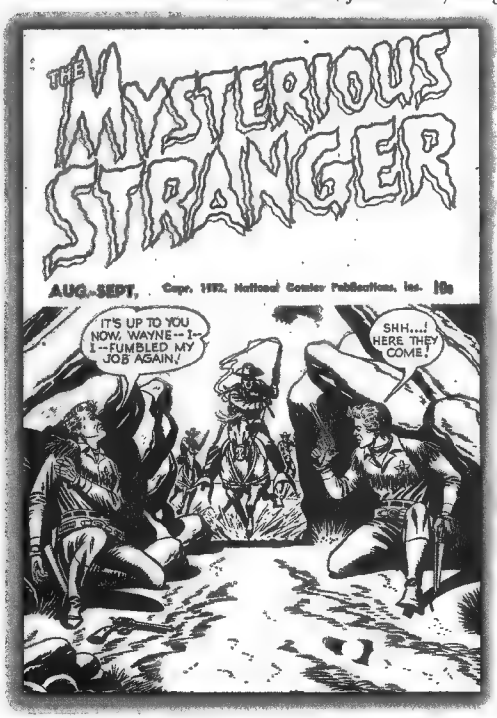
One of the most sought-after and historic ashcans, All Star #1 features cover art from Flash #1.

DC Ashcans

1940s. Even after much badgering and veiled threats (*laughter*), he has not been interested in selling them, but he did provide a photocopy of *Supergirl* for this article. The condition of *Superman… Superhombre* is so poor and brittle that no photocopy could be made, but just pick up a copy of *Adventure* #304 and look in the top left corner to see what it looks like.

All of my ashcans were purchased from Joe Desris who acquired them from Sol Harrison except for *All Star, All-American Men Of War* and *Star Spangled War Stories*. I purchased the two war ashcans from Sparkle City Comics (a then-mail order company) at the 1987 San Diego Comic Con. They were purportedly souvenirs given to a visitor to the DC offices in the 1950s that ultimately ended up with a collector who sold them to Sparkle City. I bought the *All Star* from Jack Mallette, a long-time collector/dealer, for $15,000 in 1993 after much haggling and badgering. He acquired it from a collector after spotting an ad in *CBG*

Many Phantom Stranger collectors were surprised to learn of the existence of the Mysterious Stranger ashcan.



The growing demand for Strange Adv. has caused wild speculation about the value of the Strange Adv. ashcan.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER (NN)
Aug/Sep 1952
Cover: All Star Western #60 [HS-HT]
Interior: Sensation #100 [C]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Note: The Phantom Stranger title does exist as an ashcan

MYSTERY TRAIL (NN)
Feb/Mar 1950
Cover: Danger Trail #3 [HS-HT]
Interior: Star Spangled #109 [C - except indicia cut off bottom of page one]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Note: According to Gary Carter, Mystery Trail (a third companion title to Romance Trail and Danger Trail) was mistakenly listed in the yellow "DC Publications" box as a regular DC title just once… in Adventures Of Alan Ladd #9 (the last issue!)… even though the title was never published

OLD GLORY COMICS (NN)
1941
Cover: Flash #12 [MST]
Interior: Action #37 [P]
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

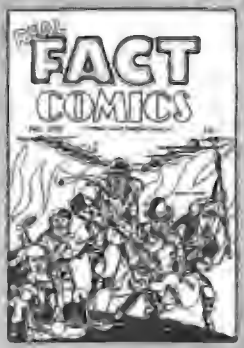
ONCE UPON A TIME (NN???)
Cover: ???? [??]
Interior: ???? [??]
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

OUR MEN AT WAR (NN)
Aug/Sep 1952
Cover: All Star Western #60 [HS-HT]
Interior: Detective #181 [C]
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, DC-1)
Notes: That's right… not Our Army At War but Our Men At War… the existence of which may come as a bit of a shock to the "Big 5 DC War Collectors" group

THE PHANTOM STRANGER (NN)
Aug/Sep 1952
Cover: All Star Western #?? [??]
Interior: Detective #??? [??]
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

RADIO FUNNIES #1
Mar 1939
Cover: Adventure #39 (MST)
Interior: Detective #19 (P)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

REAL FACT COMICS (NN)
Feb 1946
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10



REAL SCREEN FUNNIES #1
Spring 1943
Cover: Real Screen Funnies #1 (HS-HT)
Interior: Detective #99 (C)
Known Copies: 3 (Colabuono: DC has 4 more covers)
Notes: Only African cover art to be used on regular production 1st issue, and only "color" (yellow) African

RED, WHITE & BLUE COMICS (NN)
1941
Cover: All-American #20 (MST)
Interior: Flash #17 (P)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

ROCK 'N' ROLL COMICS (NN???)
Dec/Jan 1956
Cover: Mr. District Attorney #??? (??)
Interior: A Date With Judy #??? (??)
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

SCREEN CARTOONS (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

SCREEN COMICS (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

SCREEN FABLES (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

SCREEN FUNNIES (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10

SCREEN GEMS (NN)
Dec 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1
Interior: No interior, exists as cover only
Known Copies: More than 10
Notes: DC covered all the bases with the "Screen" title variations

STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES (NN)
Aug/Sep 1959
Cover: Western Comics #28 (HS-HT)
Interior: Western Comics #13 (C)

STRANGE ADVENTURES (NN)
Jul/Aug 1950
Cover: All Star #47 (HS-HT)
Interior of version one: Det. #140 (C)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Interior of version two: Det. #146 (C)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Interior to version three: Detective #?? (Has splash of "Robin Boy Failure") (C)
Known Copies: 1 (DC)
Notes: Only issues with multiple interiors, one of which is from (amazingly) Detective #140)

SUPERBOY (NN)
Jan 1949
Cover: Detective #37 (HS-HT)
Interior: Action #38 (C)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)

SUPERGIRL (NN)
Feb 1944
Cover: Boy Commandos #1 (HS-HT)
Interior: Action #60 (C)
Known Copies: 1 (Others)

SUPERMAN COMICS (NN)
(No Date)
Cover: Action #7 (HS-HT)
Interior: Action #8 (P?)
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono)
Note: One of the copies has "10¢" written in fountain pen on front cover in the price parallelogram

SUPERMAN... SUPERWOMBLE (NN)
Apr 1945
Cover: New art (HS-HT)
Interior: Superman #31 (C)
Known Copies: 1 (Others)

SUPERWOMAN (NN)
Jan 1942
Cover: More Fun #1) (HS-HT)
Interior: Action #38 (C)
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, DC-1)
Notes: Superman variations, Superwoman and Superboy, both registered in Jan 1942, but Supergirl not registered until Feb 1944

WESTERN SERENADE (NN???)
May/Jun 1949
Cover: ???? (??)
Interior: Dale Evans #?? (??)
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

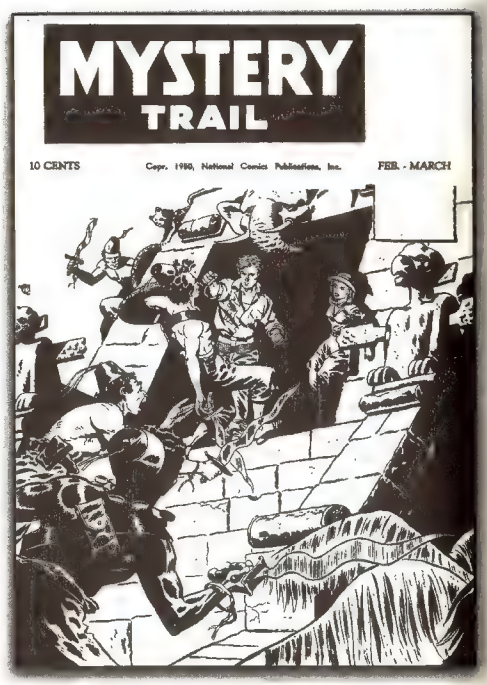
WONDERFUL WORLD FOR BOYS & GIRLS (NN???)
May 1944
Cover: Super & Spies #1? (?)
Interior: Super & Spies #??(??)
Known Copies: 1 (DC)

WONDER WOMAN #1
Jan 1942
Cover: Sensation #1 (MST)
Interior: Sensation #2 (P)
Known Copies: 1 (Colabuono)
Notes: "Registered U.S.P.O. 1942" written in pencil near logo

WORLD'S BEST COMICS (NN)
Feb 1940
Cover: Action #29 (HS-HT)
Interior: Action #24 or #25, and Batman #1 (PS)
Known Copies: 2 (Colabuono-1, Others-1) ●

DC Ashcans

sometime in the early 1980s. I've run ads in the *Overstreet Price Guide* since 1988 seeking to purchase ashcans. In all that time only Chuck Costas, who owns *Supergirl* and *Superman... Superhombre,* contacted me with a bonafide new DC ashcan discovery. It is my opinion that previously unknown DC ashcans simply do not exist in the collections of collectors today. Any new discoveries will come from the personal effects of retired employees and publisher files.

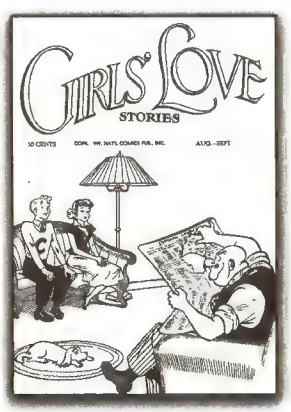


Mystery Trail (NN, Feb/Mar 1950) was planned as a third companion title to Romance Trail and Danger Trail but never saw publication. It was mistakenly listed, however, as a regular DC title just once... in the rare last issue of Adv. Of Alan Ladd (#9).

The ashcan for Real Screen Funnies #1 (Spring 1945) is notable in two ways. First, it was the only ashcan cover art to be used on the regular production #1 issue. Second, it was the only known ashcan to be printed in a "one-color" (in this case yellow) format.

DC's vault contains seven ashcans that I don't own: *Federal Men Comics, Funny Folks, Once Upon A Time, Phantom Stranger, Rock 'N' Roll Comics, Western Serenade,* and *Wonderful World For Boys And Girls.* As of this writing, they are attempting to locate them and make photocopies to be included in a future *CBM* article. (That's why there are gaps in the cover gallery and missing info on their interiors.)

In 1992 I was given access to the DC vault to do research on their ashcan editions. It was an incredible experience. To see the indescribable accumulation of bound volumes was breathtaking. I would love to read an article done today on the DC archives by their vault keeper (oops' I mean librarian...).



The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people in the preparation of this first ashcan article: Joe Sarno for background info; Chuck Costas for the Supergirl *and* Superman... Superhombre *info; Ara Hourdajian at Microcolor for interior identification info; Paul Levitz for DC history; Peter Klee; a prince of a collector from Connecticut named Jon Berk who helped me with interior identification. Jon was great and a huge help; and of course, the always-helpful, Joe Desris.*

Please note that there are still information/data gaps in a few places. In a future CBM *article, the author hopes to finally nail down all the interiors of the ashcans in DC's vault and to document them and their covers in these pages. Any corrections and/or additional info that* CBM *readers could contribute would be greatly appreciated.*

COLOR GALLERY

AMAZING ASHCANS

© 1999 DC

Double Action Comics #2 is one of the rarest, least understood, and most controversial DC comics in existence! Although most experts contend that it is clearly an ashcan (because a copy was found in the Sol Harrison collection of ashcans)... others maintain that the origin of this DC enigma is still in question. This is because, unlike other DC ashcans, **Double Action #2** has a printed cover price and a printed color cover (both from the bottom 3/4 of **Adventure #37** art), is a #2 issue (instead of a #1 or a NN), and contains stories from more than a single comic book. (Among other b&w contents, it contains two 4-page Dr. Occult stories by Siegel & Shuster – "Vampire Venom" & "The Spectral Killer" – likely from two different issues of **More Fun**. This disproves the theory that its interior is a coverless copy of a previously published issue of **Adventure, Detective,** or **More Fun**.)

No. 2
3 COMPLETE ADVENTURES OF THE STAR-SPANGLED KID
Star Spangled
NOV.
10¢
THE STAR-SPANGLED KID AND STRIPESY INVADE THE STRATOSPHERE TO BATTLE THEIR OLD ENEMY — DR. WEEBS!

Whirlwind Comics #2 (Jul 1940); Wonder-world Comics #15 (Jul 1940); Thrilling Comics #8 (Sep 1940); Star Spangled Comics #2 (Nov 1941, © DC)

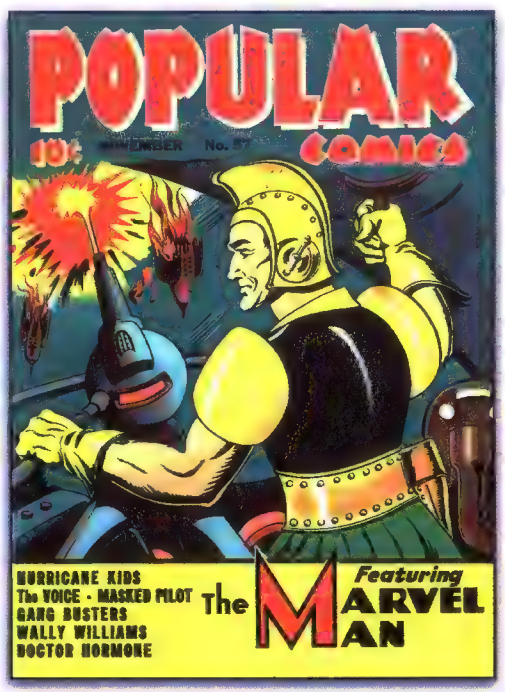
Featuring THE BLACK HOOD
TOP-NOTCH
comics
No. 18 AUG.
10¢
IN THIS ISSUE THE RETURN OF the SKULL!
New Smash ADVENTURE OF THE WIZARD with ROY the SUPER-BOY

Top-Notch Comics #18 (Aug 1941); Victory Comics #3 (Nov 1941); Silver Streak Comics #13 (Aug 1941); Wings Comics #1 (Sep 1940)

Zip Comics #16 (Jul 1941); Champion Comics #10 (Aug 1940); Funny Pages V4 #1 (Jan 1940); Exciting Comics #4 (Jul 1940)

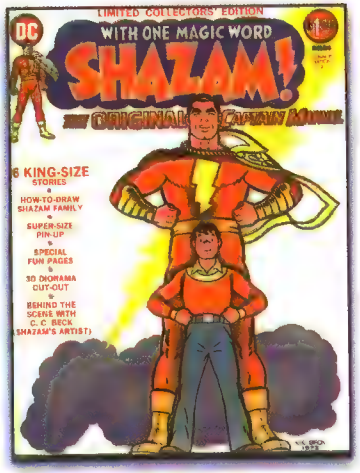
CRACKAJACK
Funnies
10¢
No. 13
MOTHER WANTS YOU TO EXCHANGE THIS FOR SOMETHING ELSE – SHE'S CAUGHT THE MOUSE!
RED RYDER DAN DUNN CLYDE BEATTY MYRA NORTH
DON WINSLOW BUCK JONES BOOTS FRECKLES ANY MANY OTHERS
JULY

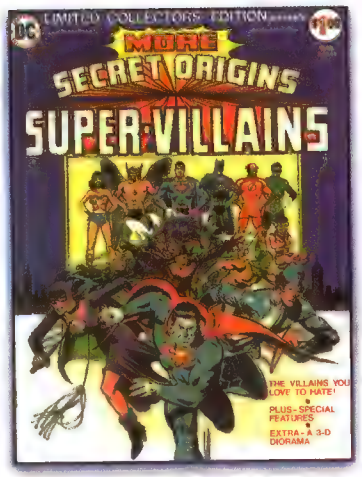
No.1
August
10¢
RED RAVEN
COMICS
Out of the skies swooped a powerful figure... it was the RED RAVEN
Also The HUMAN TOP ETERNAL BRAIN MERCURY Plus other Smashing NEW COMICS
ACTION THRILLS MYSTERY ADVENTURE

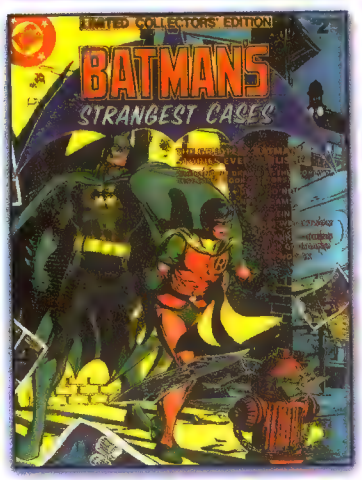


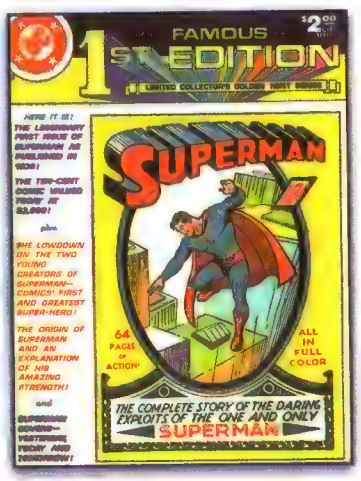
Crackajack Funnies #13 (Jul 1939); Red Raven Comics #1 (Aug 1940, © MEG); Jungle Comics #7 (Jul 1940); Popular Comics #57 (Nov 1940)

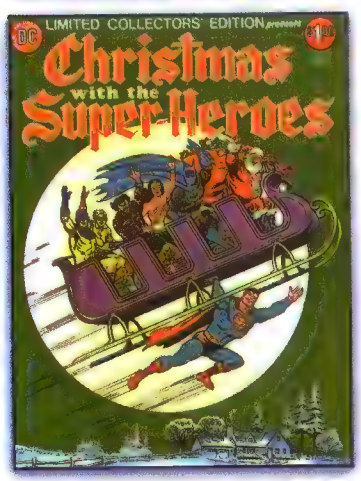
TREASURY EDITIONS

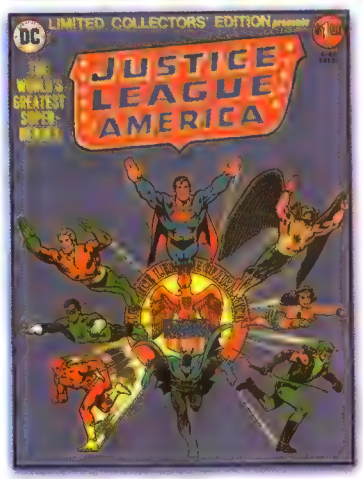


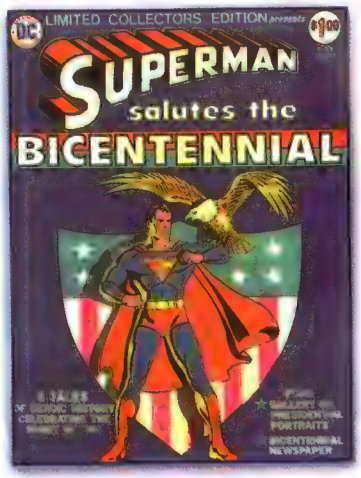












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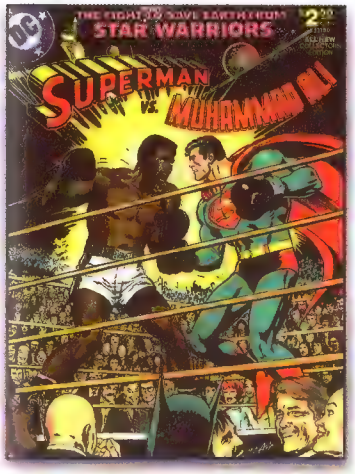

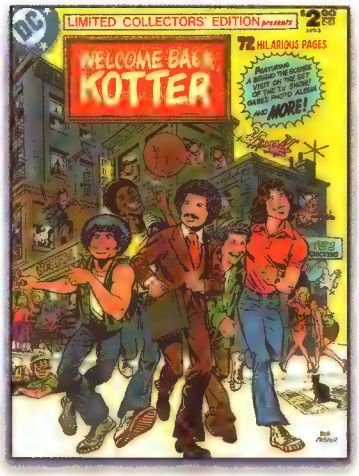

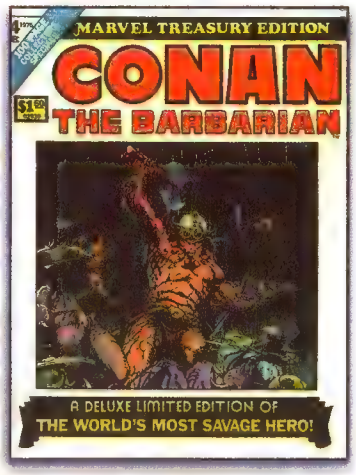

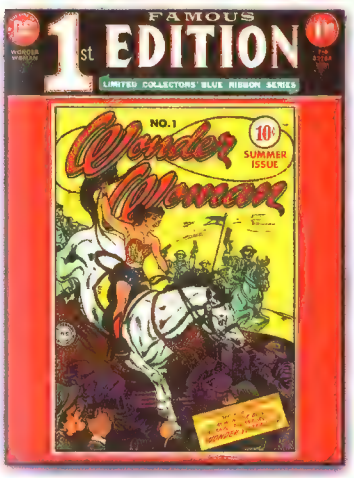

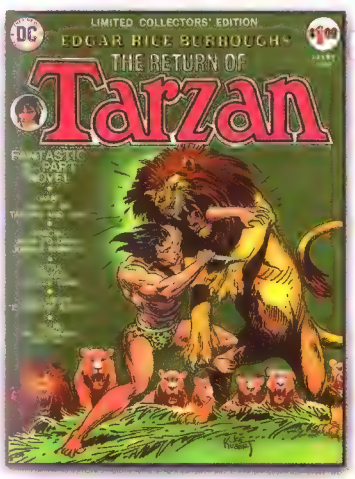

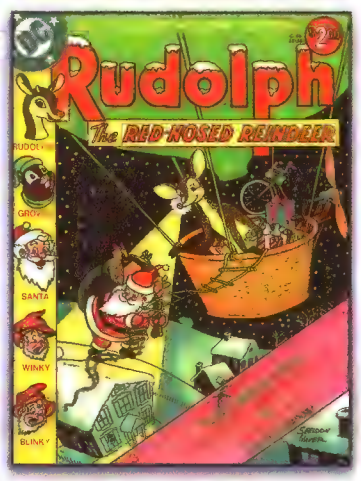

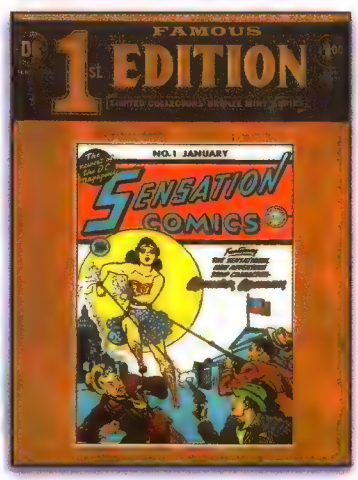

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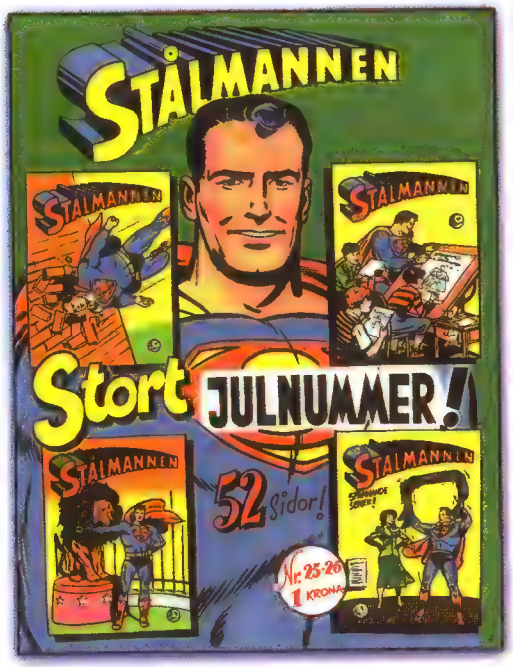

STÅLMANNEN
Stort JULNUMMER!
52 sidor!
Nr. 25-26
1 KRONA

STÅLMANNEN
MIX OCH MAX
I DETTA NUMMER!
Nr. 5
50 öre

STÅLMANNEN
Nr. 14
50 öre
SUPERMAN © 1999 DC

STÅLMANNEN
STÅLMANNENS NYA KOSTYM
ANTI-KRYPTONIT-BÄLTE
NR 11
60 öre

Stalmannen & Hoken!

OLD COMICS ARE ALIVE AND WELL IN SWEDEN

by Patrick M. Kochanek, M.D.

Once again, in my business-related travels, I found myself in a far off land—this time in Sweden to give a lecture at the medical center in Upsalla University. During my stay I was treated to some fantastic Swedish hospitality by a colleague and his family. During my visit I was interested to see that comics were very popular with his three young children. They were avidly reading several issues of a Swedish comic about a bear who after eating honey gains special powers. The *Phantom, Superman, Batman,* and many Disney titles were also readily abundant. It was exciting to see that the children were actually *reading* comics.

I also had the opportunity to visit an "old book" (antique) shop, remarkably just a few blocks from my hotel, and browse around on the day after my lectures. I asked the owner if he had any old comic books and, to my surprise, he went into the back room and brought out a box of old comics. Amazingly, almost all of the comics he had were from the 1950s! Most of these were Swedish comics totally unrecognizable to me. At the back of the stack, however, were a few familiar gems—fantastic DCs from 1955-1958. What a find. There were only two titles, *Superman* and *Blackhawk*. I bought almost everything in any decent shape.

Once again, as with my prior article on the French Artima DC science fiction editions, the *Supermans* that I found were the Swedish editions of vintage DC from the 1950s. Similarly these Swedish editions were remarkably contemporary with their American counterparts—within two or three months of the publication date!

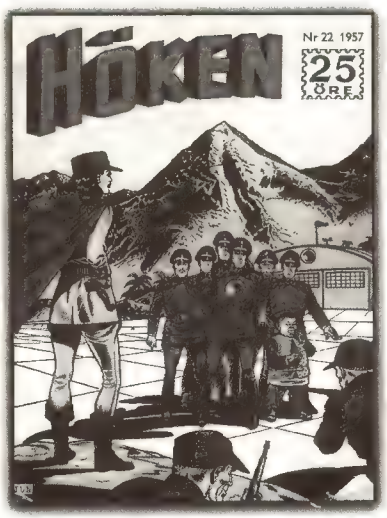
I don't know how many DC titles were published in Sweden in the mid 1950s; however, probably not many, since many of these issues of *Superman* contain Superman, Batman, Green Arrow, Tommy Tomorrow, and other miscellaneous DC features. The *Supermans* (*Stalmannen*) are about 7" x 10" in size, and the covers are similar, although certainly not identical, to their American counterparts. The covers of these books included either *Action* or *Superman* covers of 1955-1956, specifically *Superman* #100, 105, and *Action* #214 and 215. The other issue (Swedish *Superman* #11) has a cover that I am not able to identify.

Of special interest to me was the fact that the covers were not identical to their US counterparts. For example, the Swedish version of *Superman* #100, contains a unique cover in the position on the cover that contains *Superman* #1 on the American version. Does this represent the Swedish issue of *Superman* #1? Also some of these issues appear to be thicker than others, with more characters featured inside. Finally, the *Blackhawk* (*Hoken*) is from 1957 and is considerably smaller in size (about 5" x 7"). It contains only Blackhawk plus a western side story.

I hope that any interested DC collectors and historians will enjoy the seeing any covers that Ye Editor chooses to share with the *CBM* audience. I found these books extremely interesting and just a blast to look through. As my travels continue I will try to keep an eye out for examples of our favorite form of Americana as it exists throughout the world.

Happy collecting!

—Skol ("cheers" in Swedish)



It started with the very first comic books in what we now know as the Platinum Age and continued through the Modern Age to this day. The evolution from *The Yellow Kid* in McFadden Flats to *New Fun* #1 to the current crop of comics was not always a smooth one. Before the Golden Age and since—and despite the narrow-mindedness of some hobbyists—the shape of comics has changed more frequently than many would imagine.

Odd Formats & Treasuries

By J.C. Vaughn

Treasury Editions. Paperbacks. Spirit Sections. Graphic novels. Hard cover collections. They're all comic books. And they're all not comic books. For years there has been debate over what technically makes a comic book a comic book. In fact, it's hard to look at the wonderful thickness of a Golden Age title and not argue that their smaller, thinner, Modern Age four-color brethren of today are but closely related cousins.

Let us put aside the actual debate, even if just for the moment, and look at the markets created by these odd formats.

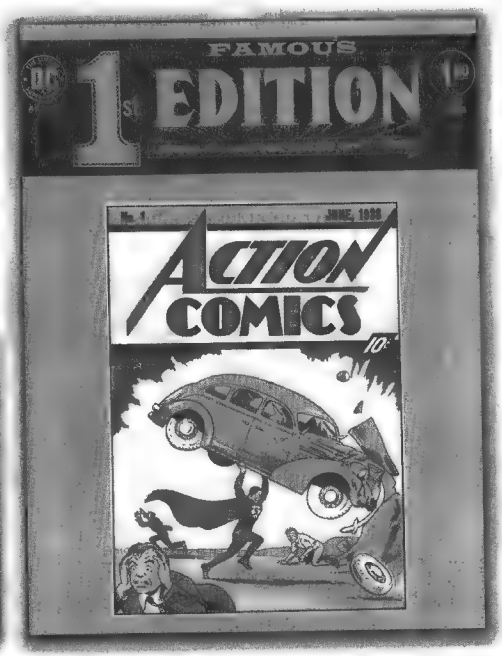
Fireside Books

The addition of this group to *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*, 29th edition, was an historic first. The *Origins of Marvel Comics* and the numerous follow-ups from Simon and Schuster's line have long been difficult to find in grade, particularly so the hard covers. Confirming what was long suspected, a sustained and documentable market for these books now exists.

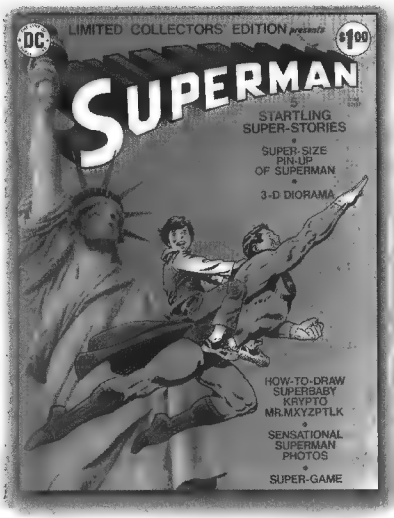
The formula for the Marvel books was simple enough: take the origin story of a key character or group of characters, give it an introduction, follow it up with a more contemporary story featuring the same character or characters. The DC format was not entirely different.

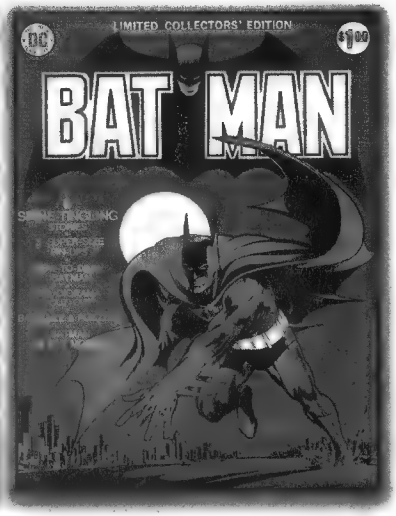
On the Marvel side, *Son of Origins*, *The Superhero Women*, and *Bring on the Bad Guys* rounded out the larger volumes. The *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Captain America*, *Doctor Strange*, *Fantastic Four* and *Marvel's Greatest Superhero Battles* were the slightly thinner follow-ups.

Only *The Silver Surfer* (1976) differed. This Stan Lee/Jack Kirby collaboration featured a new take on the Surfer's origin, one which did not feature the Fantastic Four in any way. Not only was it not a reprint (despite being something of a remake) this Bronze Age gem was Marvel's first true graphic novel, well ahead of their series of graphic novels launched in the early '80s. While clearly not the earliest American graphic novel, this is still a very important piece both historically and by merit of its scarcity. Only now becoming truly appreciated by collectors, it is increasingly difficult to find in grade (again, particularly the hard cover).



Spirit Section #8 (7-21-40); Heart Throbs (Fireside, 1979); and Famous First Ed. #C-26 (1974).





Limited Collectors' Edition V44C-38 (Oct/Nov 1975), #C-27 (1974), and #C-25 (1974).

MARVEL SPECIAL EDITION

Good, Fine, & Near Mint listings from the Overstreet CBPG #29

1 The Spectacular Spider-Man ($1.50); reprints Amazing Spider-Man #6, 35, Annual 1; Ditko-art
.....1.20 .....3.60 .....12.00

1 Star Wars (1977, $1); reprints Star Wars #1-3
.....1.00 .....3.00 ..... 10.00

2 Star Wars (1978, $1); reprints Star Wars #4-6
.....1.00 .....3.00 ..... 10.00

3 Star Wars (1978, $2.50, 116pgs.); reprints Star Wars #1-6
.....1.00 .....3.00 .....10.00

3 Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1978, $1.50, 56 pgs.); movie adaptation; Simonson-art (p)
.....1.00 .....3.00 .....10.00

V2#2 (Spring 1980, $2, oversized) "Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back"; reprints Marvel Comics Super Special #16
.....2.00 .....6.00 .....20.00

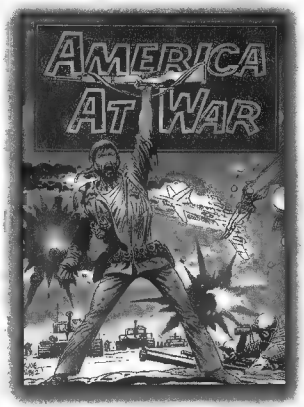
NOTE: Chaykin c/a®-1(1977), 2, 3. Stevens a®-2i, 3i. Williamson art®-V2#2.

The DC Fireside books were also theme-based anthologies. *America At War—The Best of DC War Comics*, *Heart Throbs—The Best of DC Romance Comics*, and *Mysteries In Space* are as difficult to find in grade as their Marvel counterparts.

It's not terribly surprising that grade and printing edition play a huge role in the desirability of the Fireside books for collectors. In all cases, the first printings are in the highest demand with the hard covers leading the way.

The recent Marvel reprints of the *Origins* series, it must be noted, have done a great favor for those collectors with the original books in their collections. These recent editions have contained the same familiar origin stories, but the contemporary (in the late '70s) follow-up stories have been replaced with even more contemporary pieces, thus heightening the perception of the rarity of the first editions.

For those remaining among the skeptics, ask yourself this one question…"When was the last time you saw one of these books in grade that wasn't already in someone's collection?"



America At War (Fireside, 1979).

Treasuries

The same, of course, is true for Treasuries and most other odd format products. Sure, every serious collector has seen DC's *Famous First Editions* and *Limited Collectors Editions* just like they saw the Marvel *Treasury Editions*, but when was the last time you saw one in grade?

Their very uniqueness worked against them. They didn't fit in metal spinner racks and they frequently got shelved with magazines, standing up on traditional magazine racks even though their spines were frequently not strong enough to support their own weight.

"They don't make any Near Mint copies," one retailer in Pittsburgh used to joke, "just VF and only then if you're extremely lucky."

Supplies (bags, boards, boxes) were not that difficult to find, but neither were they easily accessible either. Who could afford 100 bags and boards when they only had five or ten Treasuries in their collection? They were, for many collectors, a real pain to take care of, and yet maybe they really were worth the trouble.

Superman vs. The Amazing Spider-Man (1976) brought

us the first inter-company crossover of superheroes after Marvel and DC first teamed up for *MGM's Marvelous Wizard of Oz* a year earlier.

Most, like *Marvel's Giant Super-Hero Holiday Grab-Bag*, were reprint books, but others, like the Jack Kirby-written and illustrated *Marvel Treasury Special featuring Captain America's Bicentennial Battles* featured new material.

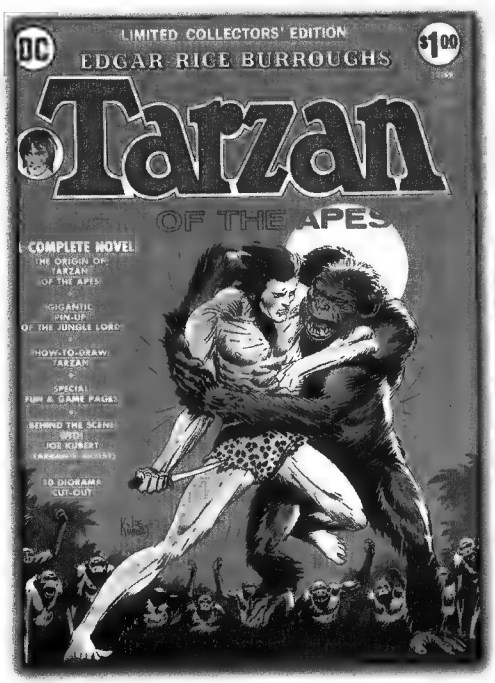
At DC it was a similar story with their over-size editions. *Superman vs. Muhammad Ali* (# C-56) and the *Legion of Super-heroes* (C-55) both contained new material while *Secret Origins of Super-Villains* (C-39) and *Justice League of America* (C-46) were representative of the reprints.

The format provided some great team-ups and crossovers, and some of the dumbest. If *Superman vs. The Amazing Spider-Man* represents a high-point in storytelling and historical value in the inter-company crossovers, *Batman vs. The Incredible Hulk* (*DC Special Series* #27) represented nothing more than a really, really bad idea.

With the advent and growth of the direct market, the comic book specialty shops carrying non-returnable new products in addition to back issues, the *Treasury Editions* were seemingly fated for a short life. Comic shop retailers and convention dealers by and large had no more use for these publications than did the newsstand distributors.

Treasuries, though, were not so easily killed off. Painter Alex Ross (*Superman: Peace on Earth*) and writer/artist Dan Jurgens (*Superman/Fantastic Four*) both recently revived the format for their projects. At least one further special, a Batman book by Ross, is planned. And yes, bags and boards are available.

Long overlooked by Burroughs collectors, Bronze DC collectors, and Kubert collectors, the tabloid-sized Limited Collectors' Edition #C-29 (1974) contains an incredible five-part book-length Tarzan novel with spectacular Joe Kubert art.



A rare Spirit Section #7 dated July 14, 1940.

Spirit Section

Denis Kitchen's recent letters to *CBM* (see *CBM* #63 & 64) brought up a great point of contention. When in their original format, the Spirit sections were distributed with local newspapers from 1940 through 1952, The Spirit defies the critics who don't like the shapes of Treasuries or trade paperbacks, but to some it still falls short of whatever it is that makes a comic book. These self-cover, newsprint comics were indeed in the format of comic books, but perhaps it's the means of distribution which bothers the nay-sayers.

Weighing in on The Spirit's side is its historical importance and the lasting artistic value of both that strip and the other important works of its creator, Will Eisner. Regardless of one's opinion of whether these sections are comic books are not, they remain highly collectible.

Graphic Novels

The beginnings of the American graphic novel predate the commonly held examples of Eisner's *A Contract With God* and *Don McGregor's Sabre*, but those two Bronze Age wonders do indeed signal the permanent arrival of the format in the U.S. marketplace.

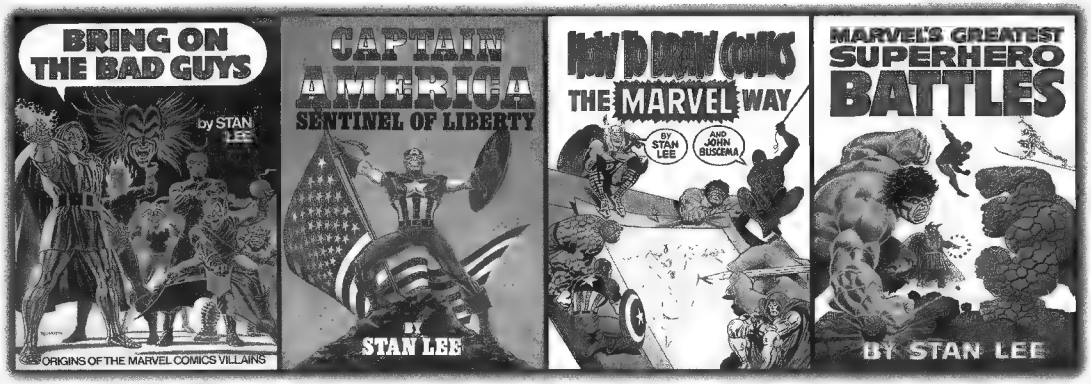
Frequently the size of a magazine (like the Marvel Graphic Novel series) or almost the size of coffee table books (like Kyle Baker's *Why I Hate Saturn*, originally from DC's late Piranha Press imprint), graphic novels enjoyed their own Golden Age in the early-to-mid 1980s. Marvel, DC, First Comics, Eclipse and many other comic book publishers (as well as some regular book publishers) took their shots at working in these formats that had been popular in Europe for years.

More serious collectors gravitated toward these volumes, but they still faced the "How-do-I-store-them?" battle. By and large these graphic albums have proven much more substantial than the Treasuries, so they are much easier to find in grade. Having been succeeded by the comic-sized trade paperback, they are not as prevalent as they were a decade ago, but graphic novels in this format are still available.

Not a comic book?

The argument isn't going to go away anytime soon, but somehow it seems limiting to suggest the collectibles mentioned above are not comic books. Comic books themselves, after all, are not comic books but comic magazines. They haven't been books since the end of the Platinum Age (and that starts another entire conversation, doesn't it?).

These items do without question share space under the common umbrella of 20th



A CBM CHECKLIST

FIRESIDE BOOKS

Simon & Schuster, 1974-80

Amazing Spider-Man, The
1979, Bob Larkin cover
Hardcover .....7.00.....21.00 .....70.00
Softcover .....4.20.....12.60 .....42.00

America At War, The Best of DC War
1979, Kubert cover
Hardcover .....7.00.....21.00 .....70.00
Softcover .....4.50.....13.50 .....50.00

Bring On The Bad Guys
Origins of the Marvel Comics Villains
1976, Romita cover
Hardcover .....6.00.....17.50 .....65.00
Softcover .....4.20.....12.60 .....42.00

Captain America Sentinel of Liberty
1979, Cockrum cover
Hardcover .....5.00.....15.00 .....55.00
Softcover .....2.90.....8.70 .....32.00

Doctor Strange Master of the Mystic Arts
1980
Hardcover .....6.00.....17.50 .....65.00
Softcover .....4.20.....12.60 .....42.00

Fantastic Four, The
1979
Hardcover .....5.00.....15.00 .....55.00
Softcover .....2.90.....8.70 ..... 32.00

Heart Throbs, Best of DC Romance
1979
Hardcover..... 13.00.....38.00 ....140.00
Softcover .....8.00..... 24.00 .....90.00

Incredible Hulk, The
1978
Hardcover..... 5.00.....15.00 .....55.00
Softcover .....2.90.....8.70 ..... 32.00

Marvel's Greatest Superhero Battles
1978, Romita cover
Hardcover .....9.00.....27.00 ....100.00
Softcover .....5.00.....15.00 .....55.00

NOTE: Prices listed are for first printings. Later printings are worth 30% less. Prices per Overstreet #29.

Mysteries in Space
1980, Anderson cover, DC sci-fi
Softcover .....2.90.....8.70 ..... 32.00

Origins of Marvel Comics
1974, reprints covers & origins of FF, Hulk, Spider-Man, Thor, & Doctor Strange
Hardcover .....5.00.....15.00 .....55.00
Softcover .....2.90.....8.70 ..... 32.00

Silver Surfer, The
1978, Norem cover
Hardcover .....6.00.....17.50 .....65.00
Softcover .....4.20.....12.60 .....42.00

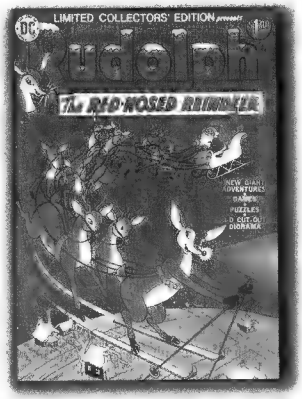
Son of Origins of Marvel Comics
1975, Romita cover, reprints covers and origins of X-Men, Iron Man, Avengers, Daredevil, and Silver Surfer
Hardcover .....5.00.....15.00 .....55.00
Softcover .....2.90 .....8.70 .....32.00

Superhero Women, The
(featuring the fabulous females of Marvel)
1977, Romita cover
Hardcover .....7.25.....22.00 .....80.00
Softcover .....4.50.....13.50 .....50.00

STAN LEE AND JACK KIRBY
THE SILVER SURFER
THE ULTIMATE COSMIC EXPERIENCE!
SON OF ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS
By STAN LEE
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
By STAN LEE
THE SUPERHERO WOMEN
BY STAN LEE
FEATURING THE FABULOUS FEMALES OF MARVEL COMICS

century comic character collectibles, and perhaps that's the best way to look at them after all. Without touching on other related items like pulps, magazines, novels and novelizations, fan publications (all of which also rest under the comic character collectibles banner), it is easy to see there are more similarities than differences between *Origins of Marvel Comics* or *Superman vs. Muhammad Ali* and *Action Comics* #1 or *Showcase* #4.

J.C. Vaughn is a regular CBM contributor and Executive Editor of Gemstone Publishing.



Limited Collectors' Edition V5#C-42 (Feb/Mar 1976) was scripted and penciled by Sheldon Mayer and inked by Tenny Henson. It contains an early computer-gone-berserk story.

SPIRIT SECTION GUIDE VALUES

Good, Fine, & Near Mint listings from the Overstreet CBPG #29

Will Eisner's Weekly Comic Book distributed through various newspapers and other sources.

6/2/40(#1)
Origin/1st app. The Spirit; reprinted in Police #11; Lady Luck (Brenda Banks) (1st app.) by Chuck Mazoujian & Mr. Mystic (1st. app.) by S. R. (Bob) Powell begin
.....65.00...195.00...550.00
6/9/40(#2)31.00 ...92.00...225.00
6/16/40(#3)-Black Queen app. in Spirit ...18.00.....54.00...135.00
6/23/40(#4)-Mr. Mystic receives magical necklace
.....15.00.....45.00...110.00
6/30/40(#5)15.00 .45.00...110.00
7/7/40 (#6)-1st app. Spirit carplane; Black Queen app. in Spirit
.....15.00.....45.00...110.00
7/14/40(#7)-8/4/40(#10): 7/21/40-Spirit becomes fugitive wanted for murder
.....12.00.....36.00.....90.00
8/11/40-9/22/40
.....11.00.....33.00.....80.00
9/29/40-Ellen drops engagement with Homer Creep
.....10.00.....30.00.....70.00
10/6/40-11/3/40
.....10.00.....30.00.....70.00
11/10/40-The Black Queen app.
.....10.00.....30.00.....70.00
11/17/40, 11/24/40
.....10.00.....30.00.....70.00
12/1/40-Ellen spanking by Spirit on cover & inside; Eisner-1st 3 pgs., J. Cole rest
.....14.00.....43.00...110.00
12/8/40-3/9/41
.....8.35.....25.00.....55.00
3/16/41-Intro. & 1st app. Silk Satin....13.00.....39.00.....95.00
3/23/41-6/1/41: 5/11/41-Last Lady Luck by Mazoujian; 5/18/41-Lady Luck by Nick Viscardi (Cardy) begins, ends 2/22/42
.....8.35.....25.00.....55.00
6/8/41-2nd app. Satin; Spirit learns Satin is also a British agent ..10.00.....30.00.....75.00
6/15/41-1st app. Twilight
.....10.00.....30.00.....65.00
6/22/41-Hitler app. in Spirit
.....8.35.....25.00.....55.00
6/29/41-1/25/42,2/8/42
.....6.00.....18.00.....45.00
2/1/42-1st app. Duchess
.....10.00.....30.00.....65.00
2/15/42-4/26/42-Lady Luck by Klaus Nordling begins 3/1/42
.....6.70.....20.00.....50.00
5/3/42-8/16/42-Eisner/Fine/Quality staff assists on Spirit
.....4.30.....13.00.....32.00
8/23/42-Satin cover splash; Spirit by Eisner/Fine although signed by Fine 10.00.....30.00.....70.00
8/30/42,9/27/42-10/11/42,10/25/42-11/8/42-Eisner/Fine/Quality staff assists on Spirit 4.30.....13.00.....32.00
9/6/42-9/20/42,10/18/42-Fine/Belfi art on Spirit; scripts by sci fi great Manly Wade Wellman 3.00.....9.00.....22.00
11/15/42-12/6/42,12/20/42,12/27/42,1/17/43-4/18/43,5/9/43-8/8/43-Wellman/Woolfolk scripts, Fine pencils, Quality staff inks
.....3.00.....9.00.....22.00
12/13/42,1/3/43,1/10/43,4/25/43,5/2/43-Eisner scripts/layouts; Fine pencils, Quality staff inks
.....3.75.....11.25.....28.00
8/15/43-Eisner script/layout; pencils/inks by Quality staff; Jack Cole-a ...2.40.....7.20.....18.00
8/22/43-12/12/43-Wellman/Woolfolk scripts, Fine pencils, Quality staff inks; Mr. Mystic by Guardineer-10/10/43-10/24/43
.....2.40.....7.20.....18.00
12/19/43-8/13/44-Wellman/Woolfolk/Jack Cole scripts; Cole, Fine & Robin King-a; Last Mr. Mystic-5/14/44
.....2.20.....6.50.....16.00
8/20/44-12/16/45-Wellman/Woolfolk scripts; Fine art with unknown staff assists
.....2.20.....6.50.....16.00
NOTE: Scripts/layouts by Eisner, or Eisner/Nordling, Eisner/Mercer or Spranger/Eisner; inks by Eisner or Eisner/Spranger in issues 12/23/45-2/2/47.
12/23/45-1/6/46: 12/23/45-Christmas-c
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
1/13/46-Origin Spirit retold
.....6.40.....19.00.....48.00
1/20/46-1st postwar Satin app.
.....5.30.....16.00.....40.00
1/27/46-3/10/46: 3/3/46-Last Lady Luck by Nordling
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
3/17/46-Intro. & 1st app. Nylon
.....5.30.....16.00.....40.00
3/24/46,3/31/46,4/14/46
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
4/7/46-2nd app. Nylon
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00
4/21/46-Intro. & 1st app. Mr. Carrion & His Pet Buzzard Julia
.....6.40.....19.00.....48.00
4/28/46-5/12/46,5/26/46-6/30/46: Lady Luck by Fred Schwab in issues 5/5/46-11/3/46
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
5/19/46-2nd app. Mr. Carrion
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00
7/7/46-Intro. & 1st app. Dulcet Tone & Skinny
.....5.60.....17.00.....42.00
7/14/46-9/29/46
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
10/6/46-Intro. & 1st app. P'Gell
.....6.40.....19.00.....48.00
10/13/46-11/3/46,11/16/46-11/24/46
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00
11/10/46-2nd app. P'Gell

(Continued on page 52)

DC TREASURY GUIDE VALUES

Good, Fine, & Near Mint listings from the Overstreet CBPG #29

FAMOUS FIRST EDITION

#C-26 Action #1
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

#C-28 Detective #27
5.00 ....15.00 .....55.00

#C-28 Hardbound .....
21.00 ....63.00 ...210.00

#C-30 (1974) Sensation #1
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

#F-4 (10-11/74) Whiz Comics #2 (#1); The cover is not identical to the original... they dropped "Gangway for Captain Marvel" from cover
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

#F-5 Batman #1 (says "F-6" inside) 4.00 ....12.00 .....45.00

V2#F-6 Wonder Woman #1
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

#F-7 All-Star Comics #3
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

#F-8 (8-9/75) Flash Comics #1
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

V8#C-61-Superman #1(1979, $2)
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

Hardbound editions (packaged by Lyle Stuart, Inc.); C-26, C-30, F-4, F-6 are known ...
16.00 ....48.00 ...160.00

Hardbound editions with dust jackets are valued higher, at least $5 more

LIMITED COLLECTORS' ED.

nn (C-20, 12/72) Rudolph The Red-nosed Reindeer (scarce)...
21.00 ....61.00 ...225.00

C-21 Shazam (TV);reprints Captain Marvel Jr. #11 by Raboy; C.C. Beck-biog. & photo 2.25.....6.80 .....25.00

C-22 Tarzan; complete origin reprinted from Tarzan #207-210; Kubert cover and art; Joe Kubert biography & photo .
2.00.....6.00 .....20.00

C-23: House of Mystery (Wrightson, Adams/Orlando, G. Kane/Wood, Toth)
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

C-24: Rudolph The Red-nosed Reindeer
7.00 ....21.00 .....70.00

C-25: Batman (Neal Adams cover and art); Golden Age Joker reprint; Batman/Enemy Ace reprint; photos from TV show
3.20.....9.50 .....35.00

C-27 Shazam (TV); Golden Age reprints 2.00.....6.00 .....20.00

C-29 Tarzan; reprints "Return of Tarzan" from Tarzan #219-223; Kubert 2.00.....6.00 .....20.00

C-31 Superman; retells origin; Adams art; photos of George Reeves from 1950's TV show
2.00.....6.00 .....20.00

C-32 Ghosts
2.70.....8.00 .....30.00

C-33 Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer5.50 ...16.50 .....60.00

C-34 Christmas with the Super-Heroes; unpublished Angel & Ape story by Oksner & Wood
1.80.....5.40 .....18.00

C-35 Shazam (TV); photo cover features TV's Captain Marvel
1.50.....4.50 .....15.00

C-36 The Bible; all new adaptation beginning with Genesis by Kubert, Redondo & Mayer; Kubert cover
1.50.....4.50 .....15.00

C-37 Batman; reprints1946 Sundays; photos of Batman TV show villains
2.20.....6.25 .....22.00

C-38 Superman; photos from TV show 1.50.....4.50 .....15.00

C-39 Secret Origins of Super-Villains; reprints 1950's Joker origin, Luthor origin from Adventure #271, Capt. Cold origin from Showcase #8, others 1.50.....4.50 .....15.00

C-40 Dick Tracy by Gould featuring Flattop; newspaper reprints from 12/21/43 - 5/17/44; biog. of Chester Gould 1.50.....4.50 .....15.00

C-41 Super Friends (TV); 1965 JLA reprint; Toth cover and art
1.80.....5.40 .....18.00

C-42 Rudolph The Red-nosed Reindeer4.00 ...12.25 .....45.00

C-43 Christmas with the Super-Heroes; Wrightson, Simon & Kirby, Neal Adams
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-44 Batman; painted cover
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-45 More Secret Origins of Super-Villains; reprints Flash #105 1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-46 JLA (reprints from 1963..
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-47 Superman Salutes the Bicentennial (Tomahawk interior); 2 pgs. new art
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-48 Superman Vs. The Flash (Superman/Flash race); swipes the cover of Superman #199; reprints Superman #199 & Flash #175; 6 pages of Neal Adams art.....
1.80.....5.40 .....18.00

LCE V4#C-35 (Apr/May 1975) featured Jackson Bostwick, the actor who played Shazam on the CBS television series.

C-49 Superboy & the Legion of Super-Heroes
1.80.....5.40 .....18.00

C-50 Rudolph The Red-nosed Reindeer4.00 ...12.25 .....45.00

C-51 Batman; has Neal Adams cover and art
1.80.....5.40 .....18.00

C-52 The Best of DC; Adams/Toth
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

C-57 Welcome Back, Kotter (5/78) TV1.80 .....5.40 .....18.00

C-59 Batman's Strangest Cases; reprints stories by Neal Adams and Bernie Wrightson; reprints Swamp Thing #7; cover by Neal Adams and Wrightson.
1.60.....4.80 .....16.00

NOTE: All Limited Collectors' Editions contain reprint material with the exception of some special features and covers. Issues #21-31, 35-39, 45, 48 have back cover cut-outs.

ALL-NEW COLLECTORS' ED.

(Formerly Limited Collectors' Edition)

C-53 Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer 3.00 ....9.00 .....35.00

C-54 Superman Vs. Wonder Woman 1.75.....5.50 .....20.00

C-55 Superboy & the Legion of Super-Heroes; Wedding of Lightning Lad & Saturn Girl;
1.75.....5.50 .....22.00

C-56 Superman Vs. Muhammad Ali; story & wraparound cover by Neal Adams; DC notables drawn into cover including Wrightson, Wood, G. Kane, Giordano, Neal Adams, Orlando, Siegel & Shuster, Kubert, Julius Schwartz, Jack Adler, V. Colletta, Sol Harrison, Jack Abel, Denny O'Neil, Cary Bates, Bob Rozakis, & others
2.25.....7.00 .....28.00

C-58 Superman Vs. Shazam
1.50.....4.50 .....18.00

C-60 (8/78) Rudolph's Summer Fun 2.50.....7.50 .....30.00

C-61 (See Famous First Edition/ Superman #1)

C-62 (1979) Superman the Movie Photo cover from the movie plus inside photos
1.00.....3.00 .....12.00

SPIRIT VALUES

(continued from page 50)

.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

12/1/46-3rd app. P'Gell
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

12/8/46-2/2/47
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

NOTE: Scripts, pencils/inks by Eisner except where noted.

2/9/47-12/19/48.

2/9/47-7/6/47: 6/8/47-Eisner self satire.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

7/13/47- "Hansel & Gretel" fairy tales .....5.30.....16.00.....40.00

7/20/47-Li'l Abner, Daddy Warbucks, Dick Tracy, Fearless Fosdick parody; A-Bomb blast-c.....5.60.....17.00.....42.00

7/27/47-9/14/47
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

9/21/47-Pearl Harbor flashback
.....4.30.....13.00.....32.00

9/28/47-1st mention of Flying Saucers in comics-3 months after 1st sighting in Idaho on 6/25/47 .9.30.....28.00.....70.00

10/5/47- "Cinderella" fairy tales
.....5.30.....6.00.....40.00

10/12/47-11/30/47
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

12/7/47-Intro. & 1st app. Powder Pouf .....6.40.....19.00.....48.00

12/14/47-12/28/47
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

1/4/48-2nd app. Powder Pouf
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

1/11/48-1st app. Sparrow Fallon; Powder Pouf app.
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

1/18/48-He-Man ad cover; satire issue.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

1/25/48-Intro & 1st app. Castanet
.....5.60.....17.00.....42.00

2/1/48-2nd app. Castanet
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00

2/8/48-3/7/48
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

3/14/48-Only app. Kretchma
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00

3/21/48,3/28/48, 4/11/48-4/25/48
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

4/4/48-Only app. Wild Rice
.....4.00.....12.00.....30.00

5/2/48-2nd app. Sparrow
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

5/9/48-6/27/48, 7/11/48, 7/18/48: 6/13/48-Television issue
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

7/4/48-Spirit by Andre Le Blanc
.....2.70.....8.00.....20.00

7/25/48-Ambrose Bierce's "The Thing" adaptation classic by Eisner/Grandenetti
.....9.30.....28.00.....70.00

8/1/48-8/15/48, 8/29/48-9/12/48
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

8/22/48-Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher"
.....9.30.....28.00.....70.00

9/19/48-Only app. Lorelei
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

9/26/48-10/31/48
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

11/7/48-Only app. Plaster of Paris
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

11/14/48-12/19/48
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

NOTE: Scripts by Eisner or Feiffer or Eisner/Feiffer or Nordling.

12/26/48-Reprints some covers of 1948 with flashbacks
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

1/2/49-1/16/49
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

1/23/49, 1/30/49-1st & 2nd app. Thorne ..5.00.....15.00.....38.00

2/6/49-8/14/49
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

8/21/49, 8/28/49-1st & 2nd app. Monica Veto
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

9/4/49, 9/11/49
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

9/18/49-Love comic cover; has gag love comic ads on inside
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

9/25/49-Only app. Ice
.....4.30.....13.00.....32.00

10/2/49, 10/9/49-Autumn News appears & dies in 10/9 issue
.....4.30.....13.00.....32.00

10/16/49-11/27/49,12/18/49,12/25/49
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

12/4/49,12/11/49-1st & 2nd app. Flaxen....4.00.....12.00.....30.00

1/1/50-Flashbacks to all of the Spirit girls-Thorne, Ellen, Satin, &Monica6.70 ....20.00.....50.00

1/8/50-Intro. & 1st app. Sand Saref.....9.30.....28.00.....70.00

1/15/50-2nd app. Saref
.....6.70.....20.00.....50.00

1/22/50-2/5/50
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

2/12/50-Roller Derby issue
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

2/19/50-Half Dead Mr. Lox - Classic horror
.....4.70.....14.00.....35.00

2/26/50-4/23/50, 5/14/50, 5/28/50, 7/23/50-9/3/50
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

4/30/50-Script/art by Le Blanc with Eisner framing
.....1.85.....5.60.....14.00

5/7/50,6/4/50-7/16/50-Abe Kanegson-a
.....1.85.....5.60.....14.00

5/21/50-Script by Feiffer/Eisner, art by Blaisdell, Eisner framing
.....1.85.....5.60.....14.00

9/10/50-P'Gell returns
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

9/17/50-1/7/51
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

1/14/51-Life Magazine cover; brief biography of Comm. Dolan, Sand Saref, Silk Satin, P'Gell, Sammy & Willum, Darling O'Shea, & Mr. Carrion & His Pet Buzzard Julia, with pin-ups by Eisner
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

1/21/51,2/4/51-4/1/51
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

1/28/51- "The Meanest Man in the World" classic by Eisner
.....5.00.....15.00.....38.00

4/8/51-7/29/51,8/12/51-Last Eisner issue
.....3.50.....10.50.....26.00

8/5/51,8/19/51-7/20/52-Not Eisner....1.85.....5.60.....14.00

7/27/52-(Rare)-Denny Colt in Outer Space by Wally Wood; 7 pg. S/F story of E.C. vintage
.....32.00.....95.00...235.00

8/3/52-(Rare)- "Mission The Moon" by Wood
.....32.00.....95.00...235.00

8/10/52-(Rare)- "A DP On The Moon" by Wood
.....32.00.....95.00...235.00

8/17/52-(Rare)- "Heart" by Wood/Eisner
.....27.00.....81.00...200.00

8/24/52-(Rare)- "Rescue" by Wood..32.00.....95.00...235.00

8/31/52-(Rare)- "The Last Man" by Wood32.00..95.00...235.00

9/7/52-(Rare)- "The Man in The Moon" by Wood
.....32.00.....95.00...235.00

9/14/52-(Rare)-Eisner/Wenzel-a
.....8.75.....27.00.....70.00

9/21/52-(Rare)- "Denny Colt, Alias The Spirit/Space Report" by Eisner/Wenzel
.....11.50.....34.00.....85.00

9/28/52-(Rare)- "Return From The Moon" by Wood
.....32.00.....95.00...235.00

10/5/52-(Rare)- "The Last Story" by Eisner11.50 ..34.00.....85.00

NOTE: Large tabloid-sized pages were published from 1946 on. These usually sell for approx. 200% of the Guide price. Also, Spirit sect. came out in both large & small formats. Some newspapers went to the 8-pg. format months before others. Some printed pages so they cannot be folded into a small comic book section... these are worth less. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dave Blanchard's letter about the DC implosion in *CBM* #66 (and Ye Editor's response) caught Sterling's attention... seems he'd already done a great deal of research on this very interesting and historic topic. I think you'll find his conclusions as informative and fascinating as I did!

DC and Marvel's Bronze Age Implosion!

by Sterling Dashiell

The DC implosion of 1978 was precipitated by a number of events. It didn't just happen as the summer of '78 rolled around. DC wasn't alone, Marvel was experiencing upheaval as well.

I've compiled data on every title launched or canceled by DC and Marvel from 1975 to 1978. There were new titles and cancellations prior to 1975, but nothing like what happened in the latter half of the decade. The data reveals some interesting, and maybe surprising, facts.

For the purposes of this survey, I've converted all cover dates to real-time dates by subtracting three months. I did this to better understand when and why events took place. There are first and/or last issues with cover dates that place them at the beginning of a given year, but by giving them a real-time date, they become part of the previous year's data. There are a handful of one-shots and special editions included in the data. In some cases, these titles were meant to be ongoing, in other cases, they were not. Nevertheless, I've included them for the sake of completeness. This being the case, in some instances, the launch dates and cancellation dates are the same.

First, let's look at new titles launched by DC and Marvel from 1975 through 1978. DC started a total of 56 titles from January 1975 through July 1978. Marvel began a total of 51 titles from May 1975 through November 1978. That's an incredible 107 titles in less than four years! As it happens, the period covered for both DC and Marvel is 43 months. Here's the year by year breakdown.

New titles launched by DC and Marvel from 1975-78

	1975	1976	1977	1978
DC	26	12	14	4
Marvel	22	9	15	5

☛ *Continued*

The Bronze Age Implosion!

Not only did DC and Marvel parallel one another in total output, but year by year as well. It seems both companies were trying to (at least) maintain their market share, matching each other closely… either consciously or unconsciously.

There were five distinct periods of mass cancellation during this time. The first began at Marvel in May 1975 lasting four months, and ending August 1975. 21 titles were canceled. DC's first period of cancellation came on the heels of Marvel's beginning in August 1975 lasting five months, ending in December 1975. 13 titles were canceled. Marvel then entered a second period of cancellation lasting eight months when 24 titles were cut from June 1976 through January 1977.

Now we come to the infamous DC implosion. From March 1978 through July 1978 (a five month period), 25 titles were canceled. Finally, Marvel had yet another period of cancellation. In six months, from September 1978 through February 1979, another 18 titles were canceled. Here's the yearly breakdown.

Cancelled Titles

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
DC	17	10	13	27	0
Marvel	27	22	15	15	11

DC takes the prize for the most titles canceled in the shortest period, but Marvel canceled more titles overall. DC canceled 67 titles in 46 months and Marvel canceled 90 titles in 53 months. Even in if you reduce Marvel's longer cancellation period to match DC's 46 months, Marvel still beats DC with 82 cancellations. Further, the data shows that Marvel had its own implosions earlier on in 1975 and 1976. A combined total of 157 cancellations for both companies in less than five years! Man, that's a lot of failures!

Now let's compare the new titles from 1975 through 1978 with titles canceled during that same period. Of 56 new titles from DC, 49 were gone by January 1979, seven survived, and 18 titles launched before January 1975 were cut. Of 51 new titles from Marvel, 45 were gone by January 1980, six survived, and 45 titles launched before January 1975 were cut.

I find it interesting that half of Marvel's cancellations during 1975 to 1979 were older titles. It's also interesting to note that Marvel's peak cancellation months took place in 1975. Marvel almost matched DC's high of 1978 in July and August of 1975 by canceling seven and eight titles respectively during those months.

So what happened beginning in 1975, to cause all that controlled chaos? One possibility is Chip Goodman's short-lived Atlas/Seaboard company. To DC and Marvel, Atlas/Seaboard must have seemed like potentially stiff competition. A company launched by an industry insider who had gathered many of the best artists available. The twenty plus titles published by Atlas/Seaboard in 1974/75 may have been, in part, the catalyst for all the activity from the big two in 1975.

Other possible causes were price increases and distribution problems. Comics went from 20¢ in 1974 to 35¢ by 1977, and of course, it didn't stop there. Retailers were finding it harder and harder to justify display space for such a low-yield items. Comics were disappearing from traditional outlets like newsstands, drugstores, and supermarkets. Comic shops were not yet numerous enough and the direct market not yet strong enough to be a viable alternative.

Falling sales prompted management changes at both DC and Marvel. In early 1976, Jenette Kahn became DC's new publisher. She launched the relatively successful *Dollar Comics* line in 1977. Then, in early 1978, Kahn announced that the "DC Explosion" was underway. Right on the heels of this announcement, Warner Communications, DC's parent company, apparently ordered an unprecedented cutback of titles. It is said that Kahn was also told to match Marvel's comics in size and price.

These orders couldn't have come at a worse time. Kahn had already implemented plans to change the format of DC's regular-sized titles. She increased the page count to 44 pages and jumped the price to 50¢. This, apparently, was the explosion announced earlier in the year. I've been unable to verify this, but I believe all of DC's regular titles were converted to the 44-pages-for-50¢ format. It seems that each title had either two or three consecutive 44-pages-for-50¢ issues before reverting to the old format as ordered. The first of the 44-pages-for-50¢ issues appeared in June 1978, the last of them came in November 1978. As fate would have it, Kahn's "explosion" and the peak of the implosion collided.

Take a look at the month by month breakdown of DC's 1978 cancellations:

February	1	June	8
March	2	July	8
April	3	October	1
May	4		

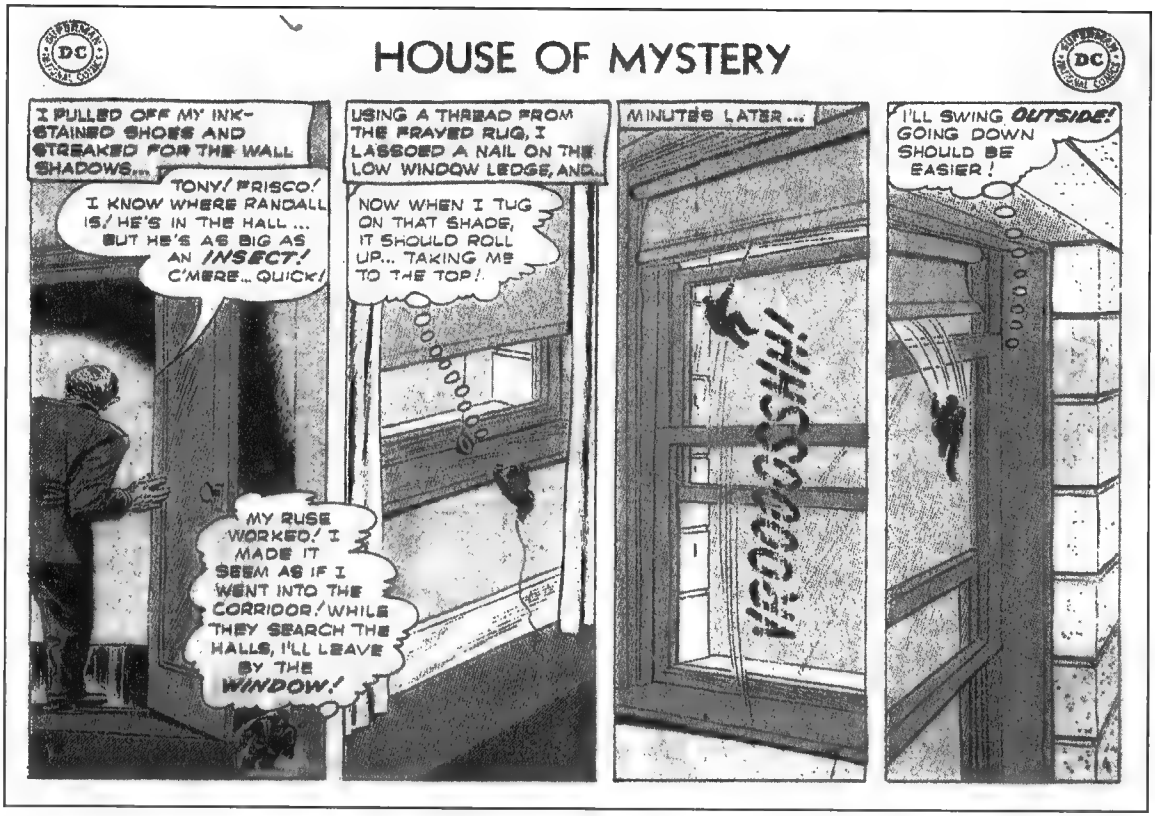
Meanwhile, Jim Shooter became editor-in-chief of Marvel in January 1978. This is the reason I extended Marvel's cancellation period to the end of 1979. Kahn took over at DC almost two years before Shooter took the helm of Marvel. Going to the end of '79 for Marvel would, I felt, give a more complete picture. Shooter did indeed make important changes. The procession of Marvel editors during the 1970s ran the company more less as Stan Lee had in the 1960s. Instead of one editor overseeing the entire line, Shooter, being a former DC man, created a multi-tiered editor system similar to DC's. He was also behind a smaller Marvel implosion. Shooter cut 18 titles in six months from September 1978 to February 1979.

The latter half of the 1970s was a roller coaster ride of new titles and cancellations. Hardly a month went by without at least one new or canceled title. The big two seemed almost desperate to find something, anything, that would sell. Although the peak of the implosion for DC can be pinpointed as the summer of '78, the entire period can be described as an explosion/implosion in progress for both DC and Marvel.

To add insult to injury, the look of comics degenerated in the late '70s. Colors grew less harmonious and more garish on covers, washout and bleeding became a problem on interiors. The printing of comic pages became so bad that, at times, the words were unreadable. I didn't know it at the time, but the printers had made a switch from metal to plastic printing plates which resulted in poorly reproduced comics. That had a lot to do with it, but it also seemed to me that the creators behind the comics had become, well, let's just say uninspired.

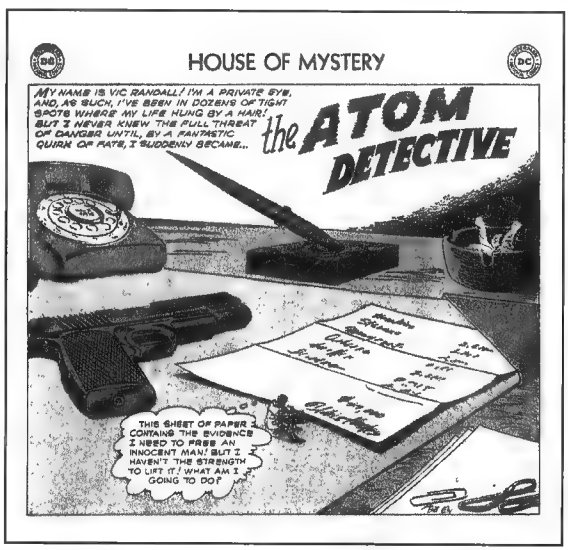
I quit collecting in 1978. Having to pay 50¢ for a bad comic was just too much. Of course I came back, but I've never gone back to collecting newer comics.

You might just say that I was one of the many victims of the implosion.


HOUSE OF MYSTERY
I PULLED OFF MY INK-STAINED SHOES AND STREAKED FOR THE WALL SHADOWS...
TONY! FRISCO! I KNOW WHERE RANDALL IS! HE'S IN THE HALL ... BUT HE'S AS BIG AS AN INSECT! C'MERE... QUICK!
MY RUSE WORKED! I MADE IT SEEM AS IF I WENT INTO THE CORRIDOR! WHILE THEY SEARCH THE HALLS, I'LL LEAVE BY THE WINDOW!
USING A THREAD FROM THE FRAYED RUG, I LASSOED A NAIL ON THE LOW WINDOW LEDGE, AND...
NOW WHEN I TUG ON THAT SHADE, IT SHOULD ROLL UP... TAKING ME TO THE TOP!
MINUTES LATER...
I'LL SWING OUTSIDE! GOING DOWN SHOULD BE EASIER!

THE FIRST SILVER-AGE ATOM?

BY CHRIS LAMBERT


HOUSE OF MYSTERY
MY NAME IS VIC RANDALL! I'M A PRIVATE EYE, AND, AS SUCH, I'VE BEEN IN DOZENS OF TIGHT SPOTS WHERE MY LIFE HUNG BY A HAIR! BUT I NEVER KNEW THE FULL THREAT OF DANGER UNTIL, BY A FANTASTIC QUIRK OF FATE, I SUDDENLY BECAME...
the ATOM DETECTIVE
THIS SHEET OF PAPER CONTAINS THE EVIDENCE I NEED TO FREE AN INNOCENT MAN! BUT I HAVEN'T THE STRENGTH TO LIFT IT! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

The age old argument of many collectors is, "Was Marvel thinking of Ray Palmer and the Atom, when they created Ant-Man?" But I think the real question is, "Was DC thinking of Vic Randall when they created Ray Palmer? Who, you might ask, is Vic Randall? I think he, amazingly, was a DC prototype of the Silver Age Atom!

Almost two and a half years before scientist Ray Palmer ran across that bit of white dwarf star material, private detective Vic Randall was shrinking down to micro size to fight crime. He did this using some of the same crime fighting methods as the later junior-sized JLAer.

In the May, 1959 issue of *House of Mystery* (#86), private eye Vic Randall tracks down incriminating evidence in order to convict the mobster known only as Lober. Randall succeeds in finding the proof, but in the process of escaping stumbles into a table of chemicals located in a nearby science lab. Bathed in the chemicals, Randall shrinks to the size of a mouse.

(I know what you Silver Age collectors are thinking out there… minus the bolt of lightning, the chemical bath is the same origin that turned Barry

Allen into the Flash. So how come Randall didn't become a quick-start crime fighter? Well, since the Scarlet Speedster already had his own book, it seems likely that the editors thought it would be wiser to have the private eye shrink.)

In overcoming Lober and his gang, Vic hops aboard a gangster's briefcase for transport and uses a rubber band to create an early form of bungee jumping. But the most startling revelation of things to come is the use of a stunt the Atom would use again and again… yet Randall uses it here first!

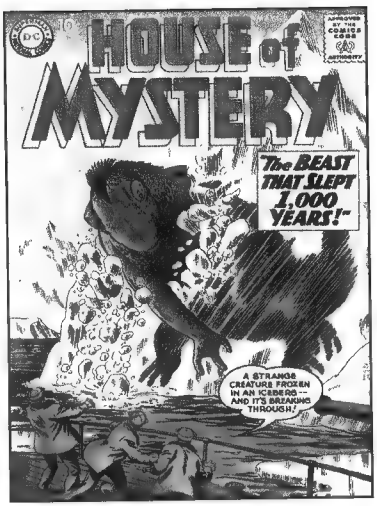
The tiny Vic grabs the string of a window shade to propel himself upward to the freedom of an open window. Even more amazing is that all the activities of this early tiny titan takes place under the story title… "The Atom Detective!"

I know, I know, the name Atom had already been used by DC in the early '40s. But remember, that Atom was really just a puny guy that worked out. Later he gained superhuman strength and his heroic moniker referred more to his atomic punch, than his size.

Nope, if I'm right, and Vic Randall does prove to be an Atom prototype, that means Ray Palmer was not only the Mighty Mite, but also Mighty Late!

To paraphrase Ye *CBM* Editor… "May you put a *House of Mystery* #86 on your want list!"

Hidden inside HOM #86 (May 1959) is what many collectors believe to be an Atom "prototype" story. In "The Atom Detective" the protagonist performs stunts just like the Tiny Titan that debuts in Showcase #34 two years later.



THE ATOM
THE SCIENTIST DUCKS AS THE TINY TITAN SAILS ON PAST...
Whew! HE ALMOST KNOCKED ME OUT!
AS FROST WHIRLS, THE ATOM DROPS THE HAMMER--AND IS BLOWN TOWARD A WINDOW SHADE...
I BEAT THE ATOM ONCE BEFORE-- I CAN DO IT AGAIN!
EVEN AS FROST HURLS THE 'IRON' AGAIN--THE TINY TITAN GRIPS THE BOTTOM OF THE WINDOW SHADE...
I'LL BRING YOU DOWN-- PATCH YOU UP--AND MAKE YOU MY PRISONER AGAIN!

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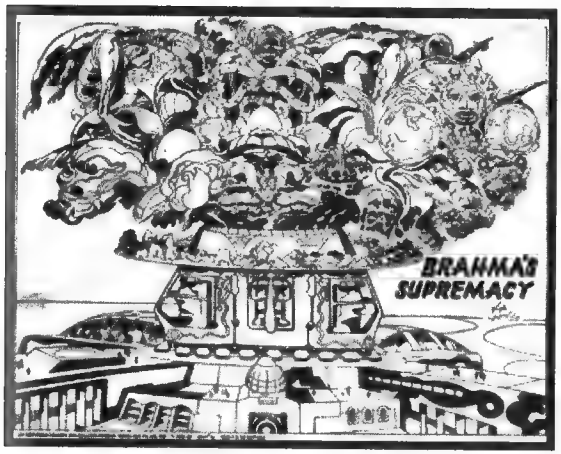

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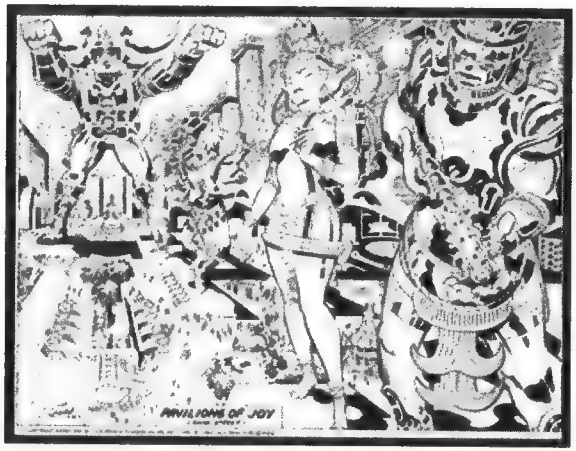

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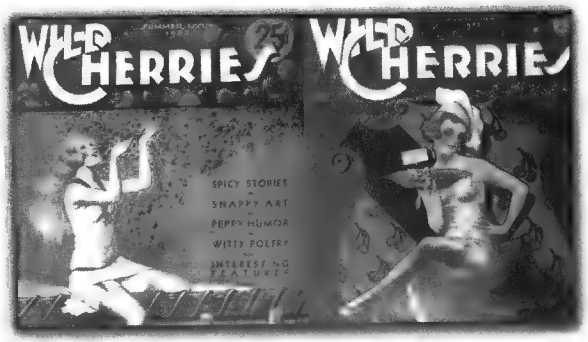
THIS INTERVIEW IS LARGELY THE RESULT OF QUITE A BIT OF CHANCE. This article could have been titled, "A Funny Thing Happened On My Way Through The Internet." It all started when I was bidding on a tattered copy of *New York World's Fair* 1939 on the eBay auction site, I contacted the seller about some questions I had concerning the book.

As we got talking, we struck upon the topic of her father having been a publisher in the early days of the comic book industry and that her father had actually drawn the back cover of *NYWF* '39! I thought I knew my Golden Age history pretty well but when she told me her father's name I failed to recognize it. I searched throughout all my comic history books and yet I could find no mention of her father. I thought to myself, "Maybe we *CBM*ers don't know it all."

Actually, most of us have probably never heard of one of the founders of our beloved industry. Unfortunately, her father has long since passed away but she told me that she would be more than willing to tell me about her father and his experiences back in the early days of comic publishing. Worth B. Carnahan was one of the first comic book publishers in America. I was cordially invited to the home of his daughter, Ms. Cynthia Woody, to learn more about her pioneering father...



A close-up of Wild Cherries #1 & 2 (1933), the first two concept covers of the men's pulp magazine which Carnahan had intended to publish. Both are drawn and colored by Carnahan himself.

(FACING PAGE) **O.K. Comics #1 (Jul 1940, Hit Publ.; not United Features Syn.), Champion #2 (Dec 1939, his personal copy and signed "Worth B. Carnahan"), and Cyclone #5 (Nov 1940).**

THE UNKNOWN PUBLISHER: WORTH

STEVEN BLASI: *Could you tells us your father's full name?*

CYNTHIA WOODY: My father's name was Worth Blanchard Carnahan. He was born in 1896 in Downer's Grove, Illinois. He grew up in Washington, D.C. and moved to New York around 1920. He died in 1972.

SB: *What is his connection to the comic book industry?*

CW: He was one of the first comic book publishers. He published several different titles in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He was also a commercial artist. He was part of the Bohemian art group that was in New York during the 1920s to 1940s. He and Charles Quinlan were partners in the comic book publishing business.

SB: *What did your father do before he got into the comic publishing business?*

CW: He was a soldier in WWI and he had painted some pictures that are now a part of the Smithsonian's collection. He was a young, artistic man. He ran away from his family to go to New York. This was against his parents wishes. He wanted to be an artist. He went into the service and was stationed in France during the war. He then returned to New York and went into art as a graphic artist. I'm not sure of who his clients were but I know that he didn't make a good living doing it.

SB: *So he decided to enter into the comic book publishing industry with Charles Quinlan. Were his publishing "offices" actually his apartment?*

CW: Yes, he published under the name "Worth Publishing" and his publishing offices were based out of his apartment in Yonkers, New York.

SB: *Which titles did Worth Publishing produce?*

CW: Well, actually he published under several publishing company names. *Cyclone Comics* was published under the name of Bilbara Publishing, *O.K. Comics* was produced under the name of Hit Publishing Co., and *Champion Comics* was published under Worth Publishing Co... all of which were my father's companies.

SB: *Did he do artwork for these books?*

CW: Yes, both he and Charles Quinlan drew the art and wrote the stories.

SB: *What was his connection to DC's* NY World's Fair *1939 comic book?*

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BY STEVEN BLASI

B. CARNAHAN

CW: It wasn't until after I sold the comic that I realized my father did the back cover illustration for the book. The back showed Benjamin Franklin and even though I couldn't find his signature mark it was definitely done in his drawing style. He always put his signature mark, which was a "W" inside of a "C," on everything that he drew.

SB: *He probably did. A lot of times the publishers removed those marks from the original art before the actual comic book was produced. You indicated earlier that your father tried to start a line of men's pulp magazines.*

CW: Yes, back in the early 1930s he was trying to start a "girlie" magazine. I have the covers for the books. It was going to be called *Wild Cherries*. He apparently never actually got the book going.

But he did other interesting… and more "legitimate" projects as well. For instance, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt was Governor of New York and decided to run for President of the United States (1931-32), my father was given the assignment to create a pictorial biography by the Roosevelt family. He did all of the writing and artwork in that book.

SB: *Some historians have suggested that your father's company was offered the Superman strip.*

CW: Yes, that was one of our famous stories growing up. He used to tell us how these two kids came into his publishing office and offered him the Superman idea. Actually, as a kid, I didn't believe my dad until I actually saw the comics he had published. He would never let me see them until I was old enough.

Anyway, he was in the publishing business and he said that these two kids came in, I don't know how old they were as "kids" because my father was an older man at the time… they could have been in their twenties.

They brought it into him and said, "Here, we want you to publish this." Actually, they wanted him to go into business with them and he said, "No, I don't think that it'll sell," and he turned it down.

That's one of the things he always told me, "When somebody offers you the chance to make a million… take it." (*laughter*)

SB: *Well, he and a lot of other publishers didn't realize that it would make millions.*

CW: Right… but so many of his books were science fiction that it really didn't surprise me that he didn't think that it would go. When the first television series of *Superman* came out that was when my father used to say, "Yes, I was offered that," and we thought, "Yeah… right," but then we saw his comics and found out that it was really true.

SB: *What did your father do after leaving the comic book industry?*

CW: Well, he ended up moving. During the Great Depression, things were really tough and he was having a hard time supporting his wife and two chil-

dren. My mother was originally from the Nashville area and he ended up taking a loan from my grandfather to take his family there. From that point on, he was a freelance commercial artist and did a lot of work for the state of Tennessee.

Then when he retired from being a commercial artist, he went into being a heraldic artist in which he researched and painted coats-of-arms. Before he died, he had an article written about him in *Time Magazine* about being one of the only American heraldic artists. That was an interesting thing.

SB: *Do you know how long he stayed in the comic industry?*

CW: About four or five years. It looks like the early '40s was about the last time he worked with comic books. He and his associate, Charles Quinlan, wrote a book together. It was a hidden picture book in which my father and Charles Quinlan did both the art and the writing.

SB: *Did he tell you anything about the ashcans in his estate?*

CW: No, I didn't even know what an ashcan was until I sold the World's Fair comic and somebody was talking to me about them. They described them to me and I said, "Oh, well I've got some of those. I didn't know what they were used for or anything."

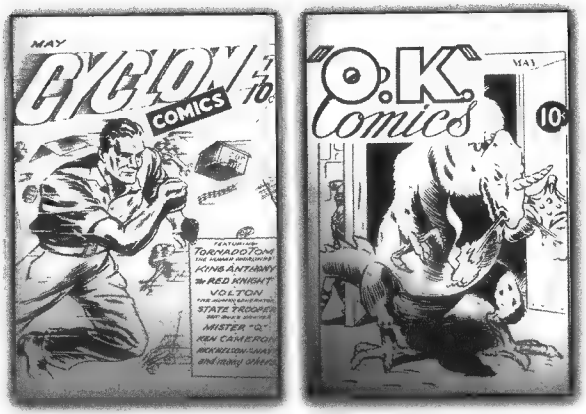
The information about my father is kind of like an archaeological dig, where somebody finds something that nobody has ever seen.

SB: *Is there anything else about the comic books that I might have missed?*

CW: Well, I know that he gave comics away to everyone. When kids would come over to the house, my dad would hand them two or three comics. He must have had 40 or 50 of them at one time to give out to kids. He was just that kind of person.

SB: *I thank you for sharing your father's story with* CBM *readers. I know they'll find it as intriguing as I have.*

CW: It was a real pleasure...



The historic Cyclone Comics and the O.K. Comics ashcans used by Carnahan and Quinlan to secure the rights to the titles.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Ms. Woody for warmly welcoming my family and I into her home and sharing her father's story with both myself and the rest of comic fandom.

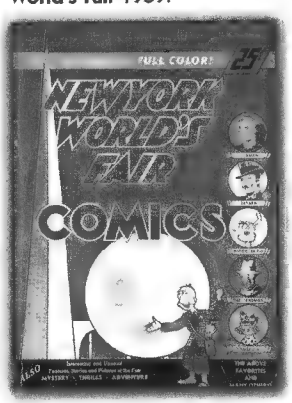
Before I sign off, let me mention just few more items of note. First, Charles Quinlan had quite a prolific career in comic books creating spectacular and detailed interior pages and covers for such titles as *Blue Beetle, Captain Aero, Real Life Comics, Suspense Comics*, and most notably *Catman Comics*. Many of these books also feature artwork by George Papp and H. C. Kiefer. Second, *Champion Comics* (which later became *Champ Comics*) was believed to be the first title published by Alfred Harvey and Harvey Publications. My hypothesis is that *Champion Comics* was initially produced by Worth Publishing and when Worth B. Carnahan left the industry, he sold the character rights over to Harvey Publications hence the title change and the skipped month between the final issue of *Champion Comics* (#10, August 1940) and the first issue of *Champ Comics* (#11, October 1940).

Third, it had been previously thought that there did not exist a first issue of *Champion Comics* and that *Speed Comics* #1 could have possibly been the first issue of the title. In actuality, the first issue of the title does exist as a 5¢ black and white edition which was intended to be sold in movie theaters and to be given away in newspapers. (This info courtesy of Gary Colabuono).

And finally, both Joe Simon and Jack Kirby created covers for *Champion Comics*. Simon did the artwork for the cover to issue #8. Kirby created a stunning bondage cover for issue #10. Extremely interesting is the fact that the first Simon and Kirby (S&K) collaboration was on the cover of issue #9. It has been noted in the *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* that the first work by Simon and Kirby was *Blue Bolt* #2 with a publishing date of July 1940. However, *Champion Comics* #9 also has a publishing date of July 1940.

Even though I did not win the auction on the *NYWF* '39, it led me to discover an unknown piece of comic history. According to *Overstreet*, an estimated 110 individuals have the opportunity to own a copy of *NYWF* '39... but was lucky enough to be the one person who stumbled upon this intriguing and exciting story.

Carnahan's classic Ben Franklin art adorns the back cover of New York World's Fair 1939.



23 year-old Steven Blasi is a second year medical student. He has been collecting comics with his father for the past 15 years and is an avid Golden Age fan and collector.

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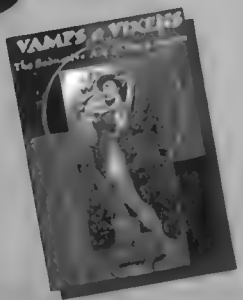

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Robert L. Ripley	Believe It or Not	$7,000
Sidney Smith	The Gumps	3,000
Bud Fisher	Mutt & Jeff	1,800
George McManus	Bringing Up Father	1,800
Fontaine Fox	Toonerville Topics	1,500
Sol Hess	The Nebbs	1,200

The "funnies" you read every day bring $8,000,000 a year to a small group of 200 cartoonists. How they rose to the top and how you can enter their select circle is told here by leading comic artists.

THAT laugh you had today over your favorite funny strip is worth money—$200 to $1,000 a day to the cartoonist that made you chuckle.

His pen and ink characters are part of a great $8,000,000 industry that is far from overcrowded and that is practically depression proof.

Of the 200 successful cartoonists today the majority were not "born artists." In many cases they were not artists at all, but just fellows with a knack for sketching who thought of a good idea or a funny character that "made a hit" with an editor and eventually with newspaper readers.

Today editors are eagerly looking for more cartoonists with better ideas or funnier cartoons. It has been proved that dad, mother, brother, sister, the bootblack and the millionaire—nearly everyone—reads the "funnies" and that a great number of readers buy a certain newspaper every day just to follow the antics of some pen-and-ink manikins.

The big financial returns of cartooning was revealed a short time ago when Robert L. Ripley, the "Believe-It-Or-Not" wizard, testified in a law suit that his in-

Robert L. Ripley (left) earns more than $350,000 a year because he ran out of ideas one day. Looking through a sports record book, he found some amazing facts, and produced the first "Believe It or Not" cartoon. At the top left is one of Ripley's drawings. To the right of it is Jiggs of "Bringing Up Father" which has brought a fortune to George McManus. E. C. Segar's hard boiled "Pop-eye, the Sailorman," is one of the new popular comic strips. Below him is "Little Orphan Annie," whose adventures bring $1,600 a week to Harold Gray.

Modern Mechanix and

Reprinted from Modern Mechanix and Inventions VII #1 (Nov. 1933). See inside back cover

Make Fortunes

by ALFRED ALBELLI

come from his drawings averaged from $6,000 to $7,000 a week. That statement surprised many people and immediately afterward there was an epidemic of "Believe It or Not" imitators. The figure quoted by Ripley also showed that he was the biggest "money man" of the cartooning industry.

As a boy Ripley had a talent for drawing, but his ambition in life was to be a big league baseball player. At 14 he sold his first cartoon, "The Village Belle Was Slowly Ringing," depicting a country girl turning a clothes wringer. But he concentrated on baseball so successfully that he was signed up as a "rookie" pitcher with John McGraw's major league New York Giants. The first day he wore a Giants' uniform he broke his arm and his baseball career came to end.

How Ripley Discovered Fame

Eventually he succeeded in joining the art staff of the San Francisco Bulletin as a sports cartoonist. Ripley admitted his drawings were not very good and his mother tried to urge him to learn a trade.

In a few years Ripley moved to New York where J. R. Darling (Ding), famous cartoonist, hired him as a sports artist on the New York Evening Globe. One day in 1921 Ripley found himself without an idea for a cartoon. He dug into sports record books, found some amazing

The funny capers of a mouse earned big money last year for Walter Disney (right), whose "Mickey Mouse" (above) sings and talks on the screen and appears in daily papers. Top right—"Andy Gump" whose creator, Sidney Smith, erected a statue in his honor on the cartoonist's estate. Below Andy Gump is "The Toonerville Trolley." Above Mickey Mouse is Mutt of the "Mutt and Jeff" team by Bud Fisher.

Inventions for November

The Depression Brought Big Checks to the Cartoonists With New Ideas

Rube Goldberg (above) started out to be a mining engineer but found more fun—and money—in drawing looney inventions, "Boob McNutt" and "That's Life." At right is a drawing from his "That's Life" strip, successfully launched during the depression.

performances, pictured them and turned them over to the chief of the art staff. The title "Believe It or Not" was put on the drawing.

The cartoon proved so popular that he had to continue the "Believe It or Not" drawings daily. Other papers in different cities wanted the cartoons and Ripley became a syndicate cartoonist with a rapidly increasing income. In 1929 he signed a contract with William Randolph Hearst's King Features syndicate. His drawings now appear in more than 250 newspapers in the United States, Canada, and twenty-two foreign countries. During 1932 Ripley traveled 60,000 miles and this year 30,000 miles seeking the unusual facts he pictures daily. To date he has visited 151 different countries.

The Leading Comic Artists

Ripley, though, does not draw "funnies." Of the comic strip type of cartoonist, Sidney Smith, creator of the buffooning Andy Gump, George McManus and his "Bringing Up Father," and Bud Fisher with "Mutt and Jeff" easily are at the top. These three earn about $2,000 a week from their daily strips and possibly $1,000 more from other sources that use their comic characters. Last year Sidney Smith, Chicago Tribune newspaper syndicate's ace cartoonist, earned $150,000 from the Gump family's adventures.

Last year was the worst year of the depression but it affected cartooning very little compared to other industries. Why? Because editors wanted more and more "funnies" to cheer people and help them forget their troubles.

Funnies Started During Depression

The depression brought fortunes to several cartoonists. The adventurous exploits of Dick Tracy, square-jawed detective character created by Chester Gould, pitched the obscure Gould straight on his way into the $50,000-a-year class, within the short period of six months.

Rube Goldberg, leading cartoonist of the

Grant Powers (left), the highest paid sports cartoonist in New York City, in the accompanying article tells how to be a successful cartoonist. Many comic strip artists started drawing for the sports departments of newspapers. Above are a few of Powers' sketches.

Modern Mechanix and

Great Comic Artists Started Careers Doing Odd Jobs for Newspapers

McNaught Syndicate whose looney inventions make thousands laugh, also found more income during the depression. He started a new comic strip called "That's Life" that has become popular. Goldberg, by the way, started out to be a mining engineer. E. C. Segar's jaw smashing "Pop-Eye" and Phil Nowlan's and Dick Calkins' "Buck Rogers," and Percy Crosby's "Skippy' have also made great strides in the last two or three years.

Movie Cartoons Highly Successful

These and other "funnies" have grown during the depression, but the old standbys, tried by many years of wear and tear, have clung to the top as popular as ever. Bud Fisher's "Mutt and Jeff," whose daily adventures are distributed by the Bell Syndicate, is still a great money maker. These two characters are the veterans of funnyland. Andy Gump first saw the light of the printed page in 1917, but Mutt and Jeff made their debut in 1909.

Another type of cartooning is the animated funnies of the movies, now equipped with voices and music just like all "talkies." Walt Disney, who has taken a mouse as his leading man and made "Mickey Mouse" a big hit throughout the world, is the leader of this field. His annual income, it is said, reaches astronomical figures. "Mickey Mouse" is also syndicated in daily newspapers by Walt Disney Enterprises.

Where do these expert comic masters who earn such big fortunes come from? How does one go about getting into this select golden circle?

You must have the knack or talent to draw cartoons, of course. Schools specialize in the art and turn out successful graduates. But there are thousands of cartoonists all over the country who are not making fortunes.

Then how does one get into this big money class? Grant Powers, well known New York sports cartoonist, supplied the answer.

Sidney Smith (above) would not have earned $150,000 last year if he had followed his father's advice to study dentistry. He quit school at 17, got a job at $35 a week as a staff artist on an Indianapolis newspaper and in 1917 started Andy Gump, shown at the left, on his very popular career.

"Mutt and Jeff" (above) are the veterans of the comic strips. Bud Fisher (right) created them in 1909 and since then they have been near the top of the most popular funnies. Fisher, who now lives on fashionable Park avenue, "millionaires row" in New York City, started in San Francisco drawing pictures for hat advertisements at 50 cents each.

Inventions for November

From "Jiggs" to "Screen Oddities" Shows the Evolution of Cartooning

"An art school education or training in a school which majors in cartooning can do no harm," he said. "It may be of tremendous benefit in giving you the technique to polish up your natural talents.

"But I have known cartoonists with no previous training to volunteer to work for nothing so that they might assist their idols in lettering in balloons—which is the dialogue—or the background after the artist has done the principal work of the strip.

"Once you have made this contact, or obtained some other work in an office where cartoonists are at work, you must be very patient as sometimes months and years may roll by and the rainbow's end still be remote. But sooner or later every understudy gets his opportunity. Most conspicuous of these is the case of the man who inherited the 'Mr. and Mrs.' strip after the immortal Clare Briggs, its mentor, died. That feature continued running, uninterrupted by the passing of its creator, simply because there was a pinch-hitter on hand to carry on the work.

"When you have gained entree to a newspaper, you are quite likely to find that the sporting department can use a good feature from you once a week, preferably Sunday. At first it might be crude, finding appeal only in the fundamental fact that it is a cartoon. But if you've got the stuff, it will improve—or die.

"If you've got something unique, the publisher will ask you to make it a daily feature. If it goes over big as a daily feature, it will get abroad that you are producing something worthy of national recognition.

"At this point you make your first acquaintance with the syndicates, organizations which take your original product and have it reproduced several hundred times. They then sell the mats—a sort of paper mould from which plates are made in the newspaper's stereotyping plant—to client papers throughout the country.

"This is what is called in the craft as being on 'Easy Street.' You sit in your studio and turn out your copy, send it to your syndicate manager and the rest takes care of itself. You don't have to worry about collecting the money or any other phase of the book-keeping. The syndicate does it all. The usual rule is that the cartoonist

(Continued on page 128)

SCREEN ODDITIES
GRETA GARBO
LIKES PRACTICAL JOKES. SHE HAS HAD MANY PLAYED ON HER INCLUDING THE GIFT OF COTTON-FILLED CHOCOLATES FROM HER DIRECTOR, CLARENCE BROWN.
HE MUST HAVE HAD A NIGHT-MARE
RANDOLPH SCOTT
FOUGHT IN THE ST. MIHIEL DRIVE AND SAW OTHER WAR SERVICE WITHOUT PAY OR MAIL. HIS NAME WAS LOST IN THE RECORDS AND WAS NOT FOUND UNTIL MONTHS AFTER THE ARMISTICE.
HORSESHOE UNDER HIS PILLOW
7-17
AMOUS ACTRESS WHOSE EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEECH WHEN LINES IS THE BEST IN THE PICTURE

George McManus, another veteran of the comic strip artists who still rank at the top, is shown above. He tells in the accompanying article how he began his career sweeping the art department in a St. Louis newspaper and how he conceived the character Jiggs.

"Screen Oddities" (above) is an example of the latest development in popular cartoons. Unusual facts about screen celebrities, discovered by Captain Roscoe Fawcett, are turned over to his cartoonist-collaborator, Bernard Thompson, to be illustrated. Screen Oddities has a daily circulation of approximately 3,000,000.

Modern Mechanix and

How Comic Cartoons Make Fortunes

(Continued from page 36)

gets a flat salary and 50 per cent of the gross receipts."

That supposedly potent factor called "pull" may get you a hearing with a publisher or a syndicate manager, George (Bringing Up Father) McManus told me, but it won't get you across with the public. You must produce something that attracts newspaper readers.

McManus Sweeps Art Department

McManus, who draws for King Features Syndicate, told me how he rang the gong:

"Older residents of St. Louis still remember me when I was a kid hanging around the Grand Opera House, drawing pictures and loafing instead of going to school. Some of the ideas for characters in 'Bringing Up Father' are drawn from stage people, chiefly comedians.

"One day my father got a note from teacher advising him to withdraw me from school. It was far from a complimentary request. My father called up a friend of his who was art editor of the old St. Louis 'Republic.' My father thought I had great talents as an artist, so I was immediately put to work sweeping and dusting the art department.

"That lasted for some time, and then the art editor saw some of my sketches of a woman with a lot of hair and assigned me to draw some fashion pictures for the Sunday supplement.

Birth of "Bringing Up Father"

"In 1903 I had some extra money. I quit and went to New York to be a comic artist. After six months of making the rounds of newspapers trying to get on the payroll, doing anything, I was down to the free-lunch counters. One last desperate trip to the editorial offices of The New York World—and I got a job there. Just luck, that's all.

"My first strip, called 'Ready Money Ladies,' was rotten. The idea was based on women arguing over the payment of carfare, sodas and such things. Next came 'Panhandle Pete,' 'Let George Do It' and then 'The Newlyweds,' based on the devotion of a young couple to their spoiled child.

"In searching about for a better idea I decided that in order to retain popularity it had to be human. The hen-pecked husband had been long established as a good laugh producer, and so I made such a husband the central character of my comic.

"It was my plan to give all of the characters save one 'mugs,' so Nora, despite the ugly maps of Jiggs and Maggie, was the beautiful daughter. Casting about for Jiggs' mug, I remembered a comedian at the Grand Opera House who had played the part of an Irishman. I decided he would fill the bill. I invented Maggie and I also originated Dinty Moore.

"Continuities" Latest Cartoon Strip

"Corned beef and cabbage and Maggie's rolling pin were the secondary characters in the strip. As much of the byplay was to be based upon Maggie's antics as a social climber and the unwillingness of Jiggs to put on the ritz, the rolling pin was handy for Maggie. Jiggs countered with his corned beef and cabbage teasers."

How Comic Cartoons Make Fortunes

"Bringing Up Father" and "Mutt and Jeff" are the old style comic strips which were intended to give the reader a laugh every day with no attempt to tell a story serially. In recent years there has developed a great number of cartoon strips which are not intended to be funny, but merely portray some part of a story from day to day. These "continuities" have been based upon the lives of historical characters, novels, or some plot conceived by the cartoonist and his "balloon" man.

"Buck Rogers" Draws Fan Mail

One of the newest, most popular strips of this type is "Buck Rogers, 2430 A. D," distributed by National Newspaper Service. The popularity of the strip is based upon the great interest in scientific developments, particularly in the aeronautical and military field. Lieut. Dick Calkins, a pursuit pilot during the war and a veteran newspaper cartoonist, draws the rocket ships, the degravity rods and belts, the paralysis guns, the moto-tubes, and other unusual equipment of the principal characters, Buck Rogers and Wilma. This amazing scientific material and the fantastic and perilous adventures of Buck Rogers and Wilma in their daily encounters with giants or tiny people of other planets are the products of the imagination of Phil Nowlan, a newspaper man who has accumulated a vast fund of scientific knowledge.

This vivid, dramatic and prophetic story of romance and adventure five centuries in the future has grown so popular in less than three years that it now appears in more than 200 newspapers. The fan mail of the author and the artist is enormous. Men, women and children send them requests for information on how to build the rocket ships, the degravity belts, and the unusual airships that carry their characters from planet to planet. Boys send in models of space ships and other machinery pictured in the strip, while many adults submit sketches of their ideas of the people and landscape of other planets.

How Comics Are "Manufactured"

Cartoonists draw their strips from two to three weeks in advance and their Sunday pages about eight weeks before the publication date.

All artists draw their Sunday pages of 12 panels, or scenes about 25 by 19 inches in size. The artists turn their pages into the syndicate office in black and white. Then in the engraving room two "silver prints" are made, which are nothing more than photos of the page. These silver prints are then colored by the artists.

"The original page and one silver print," explained Arthur Crawford, general manager of the Chicago Tribune Syndicate and Press Service, Inc., "is given to The Chicago Tribune. The original page is then photographed in the engraving room and from that negative four plates are made, called the key-plate, the red plate, blue plate and yellow plate. The key plate is black and white.

"The four plates are then turned over to the ben day men who color them. After the ben day has been placed on the four plates, they are etched and routed.

➔ *(Continued on page 80)*

Preparing for Pony-Tail Purchasers

Looking into my comic book crystal ball for this year's ComicCon International: San Diego (coming up in a few weeks at this writing) I'd recommend to dealers that they pile on with the 10¢ and 12¢ Archie titles. I can't tell you how many pony-tailed little girls I saw at last year's show, hand-in-hand with mom and dad, looking for these affordable and imminently readable gems.

Forget condition here! Those Archies that have been sitting in the "Can't Move 'Em If I Give 'Em Away Box" are usually in big, big demand every year. The most sought after titles seem to be Archie's Girls: Betty and Veronica, Archie's Madhouse, Archie's Giant Series Magazine and Archie's Jokebook.

As a collector, one of my all time favorites is the Little Archie series. Most seasoned collectors know that these are extremely difficult to find in top condition... and the most recent Price Guide is awfully conservative on their valuation. While not usually in huge demand by mainstream hero collectors, they are eagerly pounced upon by squarebound collectors, oddball and obscure collectors, 10¢ cover-price collectors, and of course Archie collectors.

As for vintage Archie original art... you can now probably forget finding any by Bob Montana from the late 1940s. When you do find it, it'll be pricey as the days of early Archie art at bargain prices seems to be over. There are a few scattered dailies around, but, you'll have to pay in the $1,000 range to get them. For example, note last year's sale of signed Archie dailies from 1946 (#11 and 12) for prices in that range.

Dan DeCarlo original art is also in demand, and still incredibly affordable. A 1950's Archie page from Archie's Pals and Gals #6 recently sold for $87.50; Cheryl Blossom pin-up page (1985) from Archie At Riverdale High #99 sold for $27; and a very buxom Veronica look-alike dressed in a skimpy negligée from the pages of Humorama (13" x 10") sold for $291.

Contemporary Archie material can be obtained in the range of $5-15 per page... and at that price, how could you go wrong? It'd be a crime to pass up some of these original art bargains!

Speaking of crime (sorry about that segue), what's the deal with these crime comics anyway? They're still highly sought-after month after month and set records all the time (just ask a few dealers who specialize in this genre). And the more ghastly and bloody the cover, the higher the demand, with POP, SOTI, and bondage/torture covers leading the pack.

Some recent sales include: Crime Does Not Pay #33 VG $375 (5.85X Guide); Crime Does Not Pay #43 VG $150 (5 X Guide); Crime Reporter #2 GD $225 (3.75X Guide); Fight Against Crime #20 GD $450(10.5 X Guide); Thrilling Crime Cases #46 GD/VG $115 (3.06 X Guide); Underworld Crime #7 VG $350 (7.69 X Guide).

And now for the rhetorical question of the month... "What do you call the late '70s early '80s—The Modern Age?" What happens in 10 years when it isn't so modern anymore? There's a new generation of late Bronze and "Modern Age" collectors coming of age and entering their prime earning years... and many of them seem hell-bound to get original art! And just look at the artists they're collecting... Neal Adams, Jim Aparo, Alex Ross, John Byrne, Frank Miller, John Romita, Jr., Dave Cockrum, Ross Andru, and George Perez (among others). The eBay has allowed a broader market to join in the search for these still-very affordable original art collectibles.

Many of these newer collector-investors are betting that the current artists will, in the long run, prove to be a gold mine. Who knows? Remember when we all thought there could never be a market for 1970's material?

After all, our Modern Age will become someone else's Silver Age (or even GA)... as our hobby slides farther and farther into the 21st Century!

MARKET REPORTS

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We've just returned from a fantastic show at Chicago... er, Wizard World... and if this show was any indication, comics are alive and doing very well!

Golden Age We completely sold out of every Golden Age book we brought to the show! It was a surprise that interest was at such a peak—we even sold many to dealers who plan on adding them to their San Diego stocks!

All Flash #32 VG $140; All Star #55 VG $200; Batman #10 VG- 450, #15 GD/VG $350, #17 VG- $300; Captain Marvel Advs. #17 NM- $600; Detective #80 GD $150; Feature #157 VF $60; Flash #45 VG- $150; Marvel Family #45 VF $80; Tales of Terror Annual 1952 VG- $275.

Atom Age We were asked for a ton of books we both had and didn't have... romance, pre and post Code horror (watch for post Code) and many esoteric titles. We completely sold out of our remaining Atlas File copies at 2X Guide in higher grades.

Detective #153 VF- $175,#174 VF $220, #230 VF $375; Lady Luck #88 GD $80; Out of the Shadows #6 FN+ $75; Suspense #6, 7, 9, 10 & 12 (all in GD to VG) as a lot $790.

Silver Age High grade still rules, and most of our stock was snapped up by dealers at Guide or slightly below. Mid and lower grades sold well at slightly reduced Guide.

Adventure #290 VF+ $84; Batman #59 NM- $90; Detective #319, 321, 333 NM- $65 each; Fantastic Four #1 VG $1,200.

Bronze Age 1970's books made a better showing than I had anticipated and many obscure titles I found to still be hot!

◆◆ CBM MarketWatch ◆◆

A report of market indicator sales (including % of Guide) by Michael Naiman

Action
#4 FN- .....$500 .....20%
#12 GD .....$720 .....2.2X
#79 VG .....$100 .....89%
#174 VG+ .....$92 ....1.27X
#185 VG+ .....$75 ....1.04X
#242 FR .....$68 ....6.29X

Adventure
#95 GD .....$104 ....1.14X
#114 GD+ .....$[illegible] 1.25X
#167 FN .....$75 .....61%
#256 VG+ .....$107 ....1.16X
#288 VF+ .....$80 ....1.45X

All-Winners
#16 GD .....$110 .....98%

Am. Adventures
#1 GD .....$90 ....1.45X

Am. Fantasy
#15 VG++ ....$2,000 .....90%

Amazing Spider-Man
#3 VG+ .....$275 .....87%
#3 VF- .....$555 .....44%
#9 FN .....$250 ....1.14X
#13 VF+ .....$408 ....1.02X
#15 VF [illegible]
#30 VG [illegible]
#38 VF- [illegible]
#39 GD+ [illegible]
#43 VF [illegible]
#49 VF- [illegible]
#52 VF [illegible]
#54 VF [illegible]

Archie Giant
#6 VG+ [illegible]

Archie's Madhouse
#[illegible] [illegible] $17 ....1.21X

Avengers
#1 FN+ .....$700 .....1.4X
#7 GD [illegible]

Batman
[illegible]

Captain America
[illegible]

Captain Marvel
[illegible]

Conan
[illegible]

Daredevil
[illegible]

Detective
[illegible]

FF
[illegible]

Hulk
#1 FN .....$1350 .....83%

Human Torch
[illegible]

Iron Man
#1 VG [illegible]

Josie
[illegible]

Jughead
#14 VG [illegible]

Jungle
#21 VG- .....$75 .....91%
#135 GD .....$15 ...Guide

Katy Keen Pin-Up Parade
#8 FN .....$30 .....66%
#9 PR .....$10 ....2.66X
#10 FN .....$10 .....22%
#11 PR .....$26 .....5.5X
#13 GD [illegible]

Katy Keene
[illegible]

Sub-Mariner
[illegible]

Superboy
[illegible]

Superman
#3 App.VF ...$1,426 .....34%
#9 FN .....$635 .....86%
#9 FR .....$71 ....1.16X
#11 FN .....$401 .....75%
#13 VG+ .....$347 .....98%
#17 GD+ .....$250 .....66%
#199 GD .....$15 .....71%

Tales of Suspense
#39 VF- [illegible]

Tales to Astonish
[illegible]

Wonder Woman
#4 VG+ .....$325 ....1.15X
[illegible]

X-Men
[illegible]

Collectors should note that the opinions expressed in CBM Market Reports are solely those of the individual dealers and collectors who contribute them.

DC Special #6 NM+ $45; GI Combat #147 NM $70; Homer #1 VF+ $55; Three Mouseketeers NM $125; 1970 Love VF+ $175.

Memorabilia All our Marvel merchandise was red hot! Many perused and looked all weekend, then bought like crazy all Saturday afternoon! Marvel Blacklight Posters—all gorgeous NM: Silver Surfer $250, Medusa $180, Spider-Man $250, Dr. Strange-Search $50, Marvelmania Black Knight poster-NM-$180; MMMS Button #2 VG $35; Artists Portfolio VF+ $200/Blacklight Greeting Card Set FN/VF $125.

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As we draw closer to the end of the millennium, interest levels and market trends in the comic collecting industry continue to reflect a favorable level even though comic collecting is being beset on all sides by an ever-changing vista of technological distractions and monetary competitors for our dollars.

To deal with these new changes, our original location in Plantation, FL, has metamorphisized from retail storefront to an "Internet/mail order/by appointment only retail business," because of the high volume of sales that have been generated by our website. Through our Internet activity, we have found the market to be more globally involved (with collectors from all over the world participating more fervently than in the past) in all aspects of comic collecting. This increased involvement has been further enhanced by the widespread use of the eBay

Continued from page 69

auction site where we have seen rarer yet low grade books sell for over Guide. Two recent examples of this phenomenon are Capt. Aero #26 (which features an L. B. Cole sci-fi cover that is not featured in the Photo Journal) in Good condition, which sold for $100, and All Winners #19 (a scarce book featuring the 1st appearance and origin of the All Winners Squad) in Fair condition, which sold for $420. We currently (at this writing) have a brittle fair copy of Action Comics #7 that, after only 25 hours, is a ready over estimated value.

With the tremendous impact that eBay is having on the collectibles market, we can expect that there will be some changes in the purchasing and selling habits of some collectors. Let's face it, no matter how the information and communication delivery systems change, it seems likely that the comic book collector will always remain true to his or her first love, the books themselves.

Recent Sales: Adventure #127 GD $56; All New #13 GD- $50; All Star #44 GD- $80; Batman #1 GD/VG (restored) $5,500, #33 GD- $85, #44 FR $30, #54 GD- $65, Captain America #66 GD- $200; Phantom Lady #23 GD $275; Stuntman #1 VG/FN $200, #2 GD- $50; Sub-Mariner #23 GD- $90; Superman #39 GD- $80 , #41 GD- $60, #45 VG- $110, #59 FR $45; Wonder Woman #31 VG $105.

GARY DOLGOFF COMICS

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With regards to back issue collecting, there was an unusual mix of fans at the Chicago (Wizard) Comic Con. Most folks were either (1) Serious Enthusiasts or Casual Window-Shoppers. The Serious Enthusiasts were into significant purchases of mostly 1930-50's material. If they liked what they saw they would spend a few hundred to a thousand dollars. This included a few dealers (more on them later). The Casual Window-Shoppers consists of crowds of people who do little or no buying of back issues. I found the Chicago Con clientele to be generally at either end of a spectrum, either spending quite a bit or spending nothing at all, with very few folks in the middle this year.

I did very well with my recent Golden Age acquisitions (most of them in Fair to GD/VG condition). 1940-50's Actions in particular were stunning sellers easily out-stripping sales on large batches of 1940-50's Supermans. I had a small accumulation of Golden Age Flash Comics that moved very well (including a lower grade Flash #86 (first Black Canary, missing a page, for $90). Also sold was a Daring Mystery #1 in GD+ (or better depending on who's grading) for a little over $1000 in cash and $500 in trade! (Trade consisted of a handful of 1940's Suspense comics in Fair to GD/VG which promptly sold.)

I sold a batch of Mutt & Jeff comics to a dealer next to me (a good neighbor indeed!) for 1/3 off my sticker, they are a slow movers in my world.

I also did very well with non-comic book product. I had about two to three dozen better pulps at the show, in shapes ranging from GD/VG to FN/VF! I sold the one-shot Octopus pulp (1930s) in close to VG condition for $290 cash and $40 trade. Several 1930's Dime Mystery pulps moved for between $80-$150 a piece in mid to nice shape, and I also sold a couple of handfuls of 1930's Shadow pulps for between $80-$120@.

Not all pulps sold as well. I also had an assortment of Romance and Blue Book pulps for sale at $3 each. I've always loved the look of pulps and have dabbled in them on and off for about 20 years. Selling them, dealing with them, as well as meeting pulp customers at the shows has gotten me re-energized about pulps.

I sold a number of 1920's Dime Novels with some fairly interesting covers for $3 each in batches of 12-50 at a time. I also moved over 1,000 old magazines for about $1.50-$3 each including a magazine box of Liberty magazines for $175. I was also displaying some cool-looking '40's-'70's romance magazines along with Radio & Television news magazines.

Various Kitchen Sink publications did well, including books that included the Robert Crumb Coffee Table book softcover... sometimes selling entire cases to other dealers!

Original Art at the show moved well including some Keeping Up With the Joneses Sunday strips from the 1920s for $75 each; a 1960's Flash page for $400; and several Katy Keene pages. The only thing that didn't sell very well for me was my table stock of books from the 1960s for $3 and up (although I did sell some beautiful '60s Marvels, TTA, TOS, etc., for about $10 each). I also sold a number of 1970's DC/Marvels for $1 and up-mostly for less than wholesale! (back to mail order and warehouse visitor sales for these books!).

Soapbox My only major disappointment at the ChicagoCon was the almost total lack of artist guests and creators that were active during 1940-1980. I have always thought of the Wizard World as being focused on the present era of artists, and I believe my suspicions have proved correct! Another dealer pointed out that for only a bit more money they could have sponsored some of the older talent! Even a fellow who grew up with 1980's comics complained about the lack of guests from his era!

C'mon Wizard! With all due respect to the new work being done, comics do have a significant history, y'know! Some of the dealers offered the opinion that bringing in the older artists would correspondingly bring in more 'spending collectors'. Since dealers pay good money for their tables, the promoters should perhaps show more effort to support and promote their financial interests collectively.

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Our comic book market is really expanding and with the rush of Internet trading, diehard comic collectors and dealers are faced with two major factors when buying and selling comic books: (1) Everyone and their relatives can now sell anything they want on-line... with no middleman (eBay has become an international flea market). Lots of stupid money is being paid for comic books JUST BECAUSE of who they feature on a cover, which dolls they contain that can be copied or cut out, and what advertising pages they have on their covers.

(2) There is absolutely no concrete grading guidelines in the international search for ANY items on the Internet. A "good" condition comic book according to Overstreet stan-

Pulp Magazine Report

by David W. Smith

A two week period during June/July 1999 turned out to be a very pivotal time for the hobby of pulp collecting. Within this short space of time the 1999 Pulp Con (the seminal pulp culture event of the year) was held, preceded by the sale of the largest and most important pulp and science fiction collection ever to be offered on the auction block.

The annual Pulp Con was held in Dayton, Ohio, in early July. The selling was brisk, the buying seemed to be up from last year, and there were still bargains to be had, and rarities to acquire.

Although some areas were not as well represented as they were at past Pulp Cons (very early Shadows were in short supply as well as high grade Spicys, Saucys, Terrors and Horrors) both the dealers room and the auctions offered something for just about everyone in attendance.

Some specific Pulp Con prices realized are as follows: A very high grade set of Miracle Science Fiction (2 issues) $1,400; World War #5 $700; Tales Of Mystery & Magic #3 with tape on the spine $260, #5 very low grade $125; Shadow (May 15, 1942, Yakama copy) $350; Famous Fantastic Mysteries (June 1944, Yakima copy) $100; Oriental Stories (mid range condition, Summer 1932) $250; Spicy Detective (April 1939) VG/FN $280; and Spicy Adventure (July 1937) VG $240.

Spicy titles were in high demand, as well as most hero pulps with Doc Savage, The Spider and The Shadow dominating that genre. However, the cheaper second level hero pulps also enjoyed good action. A group of adventure-type titles were auctioned off with the largest values attached to issues with Edgar Rice Burroughs' stories.

Also, rumor has it that the original art to the very first Doc Savage Pulp traded hands for an undisclosed amount.

Also of note was the recent Sotheby's auction which offered the core of the late Sam Moskowitz Collection. This incredible collection included pulps, pulp art, manuscripts, first edition books, correspondence between pulp authors, and other interesting ephemera from what has been described as one of the greatest repositories of 20th century science fiction. Moskowitz, considered the father of science fiction fandom, was also a writer, publisher, and editor in the field. His most lasting impact however, may turn out to be his insightfulness in assembling a truly magnificent pulp archive.

The most significant item from a pulp perspective was the October, 1912 issue of All-Story Magazine. It contains the first Burroughs' Tarzan of the Apes story. Long considered the Action #1 of pulp collectors, his copy carried a catalogue estimate of $4,000-6,000. However, this estimate was shattered when a Washington state pulp and comic collector battled it out with a comic and art collector from the east. The hammer price was an amazing $15,000 plus 15% buyers premium! This pulp now has the distinction of setting the record price paid for a pulp… $17,250!

(It's interesting to note that just two years ago in an earlier Sotheby's auction, another copy of this pulp didn't even make minimum reserve and later traded hands after the auction for a figure not even close to the one achieved here in 1999.)

Sold early on in the auction, the Tarzan pulp seemed to set an upbeat tone for the aggressive bidding which continued on throughout the auction as there was almost a 100% sell-through of lots.

Some of the highlights of this auction (figures quoted here include the 15% buyers premium) include the original Frank R. Paul artwork for the cover of Science Wonder Stories (Winter 1930) which sold for in excess of $60,000! Another original Paul cover (Air Wonder Stories, October 1929) sold for $23,000. A nice grouping of early All-Story, Argosy, and All-Story Weeklys sold for $5,462 (this one contained many early Burroughs' Stories). A lot of 44 Black Mask pulps containing the very first appearance of The Maltese Falcon, went for $10,350. A group of very high grade Terror Tales sold for $3,162.

With most of the pulp lots meeting or exceeding estimate, there didn't seem to be any bargains here. But, perhaps there were many bargains if you look at it from another perspective. Many feel (as I do) that if you are buying a solid, high demand pulp title in at least mid grade, the market should catch up to it so fast that in a few months or a year, the price you paid may look like a bargain. The last year or so has proven this statement to be at least partially true. Market demand is clearly not keeping up with supply….

You can buy extremely rare pulps for $1,000 or less, and $200 will get you a pulp comparable in condition, demand, and rarity to that of a comic book many times that value. When you stop to realize that comics have sold well over the $100,000 mark, it makes the $17,250 paid for a pulp look minuscule by comparison. To put it in better perspective, think of the Golden Age and Silver Age comic market in 1974. That's what the pulp market is like now. Plus, we are on the verge of seeing the first true Pulp Price Guide, likely to be published in 2000. Consider the impact this will have on the pulp market.

The pool of still-existing pulps is fairly finite and not nearly as large as comics. Even newly found collections are not keeping up with the increased demand. Comic books were saved more than pulps and many more different comic titles were published than pulp titles. Thus the expectation that pulps are as plentiful as comics is not realistic.

Comic collectors new to pulps are usually shocked to discover that high grade is even rarer in pulps than it is in comics. Pulp magazines were printed even more cheaply than their comic book counterparts. With rare exception, collectors are just not going to find or be able to put together a run of any significance in the same condition as… say… Amazing Spider-Man or other post 1960 titles. Those who do embrace pulps will be sometimes forced to settle for lower grades than they are used to in comics. Certainly there will be times when one "gets lucky" and finds a real gem or two… but these occasions are the exceptions and not the rule. Comic collectors who move into pulps will be faced with lowering their condition standards a bit… and their expectation levels.

I feel today's pulp marketplace is very solid and poised for continued and steady increases in value… it's clear that the hobby has seen continuous and steady growth in the last decade, and explosive growth in the last two years or so. Yet there are still excellent bargains out there. So whether you love the thrill of the hunt or the smell of the paper… pulp collecting awaits you! ■

dards can still disappoint the novice who thinks such a description parallels their own "nice" or "great." Arrgh!

But there is a plus to the Internet. I am now selling hundreds, nay thousands of comic books to people who would never think of looking me up at a "comic book show" or who would order from me via mail order catalogues. That is the kicker of this new expanded audience!

I still haven't totally figured out the wants of many in the worldwide Internet marketplace as few buyers of comic books have translated into mail order customers. And it can't be because "books are going for so cheap on the Internet." I can say for a fact that 90% of the items I sold in the second quarter of the year went FOR MORE than they were listed in a past catalogue.

The other plus (or minus) is the international market that is hungry for United States four-color product. I shake my head when writing checks out to the post office that equal my sales to folks abroad. But when foreign-born buyers ante up the dollars for shipping, can one say "no"?

It's a wonderful way to move all those Disneys that no one between "sea to shining sea" will buy these days... and for Guide! And while we are rubbing our hands together over this new found Internet wealth, what is going to happen when the Comics Guaranty Corporation goes big-time and convinces "us" to make plastic sandwiches of our comics for the investment marketplace. The plus is that the potential is there to sell a lot of BIG books outside of the current hobby-base. The downside is when a plasticized Spawn #1 that retails for $10 is supposedly worth considerably more because IT HAS BEEN CERTIFIED AND HOUSED IN PLASTIC!

It will only be a matter of time before a supplementary Price Guide will appear that tells us what certificated comic are worth, compared to "real" comics or the pedigree collections. Arrgh!

Still, I'm finding lots of sales within the hobby, especially to people who like a nice stack of comics for a $100 or so. War, westerns, Charlton horror, Ditko & Kirby, Alex Toth, Wrightson, and Kaluta mystery covers, 1950's and '60's Harveys and Archies... all CAN sell before even being listed these days.

Again, the Internet, e-mail, and scanning has increased the immediate fulfillment of many a want list. But what to do with the dozens of copies that come in daily of modern comics whose only place in the warehouse is behind the unsold hundreds of X-titles that one can't sell for a half-buck or even a quarter. Will yesterdays teens come back to this hobby? Will tomorrow's youth enter our doors? Can I survive as a comic dealer and reach retirement before "my" generation decides to liquidate big-time?

Time to go look at that original art hanging on my walls. Is it truly "art?" Another discussion for another day.

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Welcome to summer in central Florida. Hot, humid, and lots of rain! Sales have been steady if not spectacular. Silver Age Marvel and DC still lead the way. The lower grade books sell well while the more expensive high grade copies have a problem finding a home due to higher cost—most collectors simply cannot afford books in the $1,000 and up range. As usual, we have had to discount certain titles and groups of comics. I would estimate that we only receive full Overstreet 30%-40% of the time. As I have stated in the past, I feel that the overall pricing structure still needs to be lowered in order to improve across the board sales.

Silver Age Marvels in the Good to Fine range moved very well this month. Amazing Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, Journey Into Mystery, and Tales of Suspense sold briskly. We were also able to purchase a 1960's Marvel collection that included every superhero book from late 1962 to 1969 in mid grade.

Silver DC books sell in spurts. One week Batman will move... the next week it will be another title. Overall DC sales are decent but a bit behind Marvel this month. Charlton, Gold Key, Harvey, and other similar brands are slow as usual.

Recent Silver Age Sales: Amazing Spider-Man #1 VG $900, #17 good $40; Batman #110 GD $25; Detective #230 GD $50; Fantastic Four #2 GD $250, Strange Tales #57 VG $30, Tales Of Suspense #40 VG $200.

Golden Age Kind of quiet this month. We picked up a run of early Batman but, that was about it. Most collectors here cannot afford the better Golden Age comics. Demand was light this month.

I am seeing more and more restored books from this period and I think the entire hobby needs to address this growing issue with a price listing and general information in the next Overstreet Price Guide. Not all books would be listed... we could start with key popular issues and go from there. The time has come!

Recent Sales: Action #18 GD $250; Batman #44 GD $100, #62 GD $140; FC #16 FR $150; Prize #60 VG $22; Superman #11 FN $400.

Art, Toys, & Disneyana We bought a large vintage Disney collection this month. Lots of early Disneyland items and 1940's-1950's cartoon and movie pieces. These items have always had a good sales record for us—we predict we'll do well with this group. Demand continues for 1960's TV and comic character toys. We do not see as much of this material as we could sell. I also get requests for original art but have had little offered to me in recent months.

Recent Sales: Robin Aurora kit in box $150; Disneyland 1957 guidebook $30; Flintstones cel $100; Capt. Action doll loose $95.

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Timelys are going very strong and are selling very quickly at or above Guide prices. Collectors, and even dealers, are lucky to find Timelys at Guide, especially issues with Captain America in them. As usual, hot pre-Code Horror, Sci-Fi, Good Girl, and Bad Girl books are selling for over Guide prices (see the list below under "Hot Miscellaneous" for some multiple of Guide sales). The more seductive the cover, the more desirable it is. If you've got 'em, they sell well on the net.

I've seen a resurgence in key Marvels of late. Many Comiclink buyers are snapping

these up, especially if discounted a little bit below Guide (10-20%). High-grade Silver Age Marvels are still quick sellers. As usual, accurately graded, NM/NM+ 1960's Marvels are selling at for 1.5 to 2x Guide very quickly especially when they are Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, or X-Men. High grade Silver Age collectors continue to be very picky when paying well over Guide, but when the right grade comes along there are many willing to pay premiums.

Timely Sales: All Winners #12 Apparent NM (restored) $350; Captain America Comics #33, VG- $400, #52 FN- $375; USA #14 VGF $285; Young Allies #1 NM- $9,000.

Marvel Sales: Avengers #1 FN $515, #6 VF- $110; Fantastic Four #1 VG/FN $1,750, #1 VG (trimmed, tear seal) $1,500, #2 GD+ $250, #48 NM- $800; Hulk #2 GD $108, #181 NM+ $595; Journey Into Mystery #83 GD $275, #117 NM- $105; Spider-Man #1 VG/FN $1800, #3 NM- (restored) $475, #17 FN $106, #28 NM (Winnipeg) $725 (over 2x Guide), #50 NM- $370, Annual #1 FN+ $200; Strange Tales #1 VG+ $800, #3 VG+ $195; Tales Of Suspense #39 VG $475; Tales To Astonish #35 FN $225; X-Men #1 rusty staples otherwise VF $1800, #1 VG/FN $780, X-Men Lot (#1 VG-, #2 VGF, #3 VG+) $940 (25% off).

DC Sales: Action Comics #18 VG (restored) $315, #27 VG $325; Brave & Bold #34 VF/NM $1800; Showcase #23 GD+ $125; Strange Adventures #180 F/VF $95.

Hot Miscellaneous: Blue Bolt #119 VG/VG- $85; Claire Voyant #4 FN $240; Fantastic #8 VF- $615; Rulah #25 FN $120; Reform School Girls VG+ $800; Underworld Crime #7 VG- $200; Witches Tales #25 VG $175.

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What can I say that has not already been said about selling comics? It is fun at times and a royal pain other times. For those of you who do not deal on a full-time level, it has its best of times and its worst of times. I am going to go out on a limb here and say that one of THE hardest parts of this job *(Continued on page 75)*

THE MATT SCHIFFMAN REPORT

More selection being offered!

As we head to San Diego the interest in comics seems to heighten… spreading to just about every facet of our hobby. Collectors are finding more and more breadth of selection being offered by some generalist dealers… while others are beginning to specialize as entirely new segments of collectibles begin to see the light of day. Most dealers report that the Chicago Con was successful, surprised a few sellers who had predicted otherwise.

Pulps It's easy to see how the long-overlooked paper collectibles have become all the rage. Most have great covers, are scarce, unknown and yet-to-be-discovered interior art, many famous authors… all this at relatively bargain prices. This is a definite recipe for demand. Many small collections are being discovered and brought to market with increasing success. One look at eBay and you can see how well pulps are doing.

Dr. Death #2 GD $200; Horror Stories 8/39 VF $275; Thrilling Mystery 4/38 VF $185, The Shadow 9/34 GD $245, 7/38 FN $180.

Golden Age Where have all the Timelys gone? Collectors are looking, but finding it difficult to locate even a small part of the the selection that was once available. This lack of Timelys may support the contention of many who pioneered the early collecting of this company that Timelys are much more scarce than their DC counterparts. High grade Timely collectors continue to face rapidly escalating prices, if and when material becomes available.

At the other end of the grading spectrum, low grade DC and Timely books continue to set records when in an auction format. The spreads on DC books continue to be in flux… as high grade books sell around Guide, FN books often sit idle, and GDs bring well over Guide.

Batman #20 GD $350; Capt. Am. #26 FN $990; Hit #7 App.VF $810; Human Torch #21 GD $240; Nickel #1 GD $444; Police #1 FR $400; Punch Comics #12 GD $185; Real Fact #5 VF$840; Star Comics #8 FN $190; Sub-Mariner #10 GD $235; Superman #17 FR $90; True Aviation #1 VF $350.

1950s Fox Good Girl and Romance books are back on top and finding huge success on-line. Pre-Code horror continues to be in demand… but the ability of dealers to meet that phenomenal demand has been somewhat low. Most oddball and/or one-shot books are in huge demand, but few make it to dealer lists.

Cinderella Love #26 VG $75; Dagar #21 FR $32; Famous Crimes #5 FN $95; Gem Comics #1 FN $135; Heckle and Jeckle #1 App/VF $110; Hickory #1 FN $75; Hit Comics #65 VF $140; Jeanie Comics #13 VF $180; Phantom Lady #23 GD $212; Rulah #17 GD $110; Shocking Mystery Cases #57 NM $260; Space Squadron #4 NM $450.

Silver Age Showcase and Brave & Bold have been in great demand during the last two months, perhaps sparked by the nice B&B collection that surfaced in Los Angeles recently. Many early buyers used the find as an opportunity to upgrade the tougher issues. Also high grade House of Secrets and House of Mystery are becoming highly requested. As for Marvel, high grade Avengers #1-25 are in demand.

B&B #75 NM $80, #88 NM $55; Capt. Am. #101 NM $68; Fam. Monsters #4 (ltd sticker) GD $495; Hulk #128 NM $35; Rawhide Kid #2 VF $180; Strange Tales #150 NM $40; Superman #158 NM $110.

Bronze Age Warren Mags, Marvel Mags, DC comic-related books, Marvel and DC Premiums, toys, action figures, and DC Horror books continue to bring astounding prices. As always, condition is key. Dealers report increased demand for the $1 format DC books Master of Kung Fu.

Fear #1 NM $32; Ghost Rider #1 NM $70; GI Joe #1 NM $18; Iron Fist #15 VF $38; Marvel Spotlight #2 VF $110; Shazam #1 NM/M $18; The Shadow #3 NM $15; Vampirella #1 NM/M $650; Vampirella #1 VF/NM $390; Watchmen #10 NM $18; Werewolf by Night #32 NM $88.

Original Art The problem is not demand… it's availability, and collectors are picking up more and more original art off the Internet. Watch for this market to find a whole new level and a large influx of new consumers.

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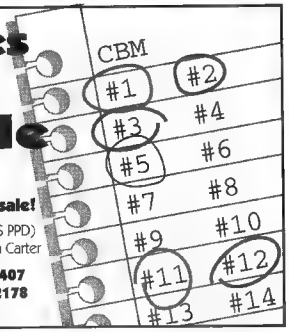

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MARKET REPORTS

Continued from page 73

(and there are several), is trying to get people off the phone once they lapse into their story modes. You know; "I once had every comic book in the world and a giant squid ate them" stories.

And if that isn't the bad enough, people continue on to say how much they would be worth today if only yadda, yadda, yadda. I cannot talk to everybody if every caller wants to tell me about the horse they bet on in 1959! (I am secretly working on a telephone that will ring every 15 minutes so I can politely beg off the phone.)

Onward... looking back at the last twelve months, three significant things happened in the hobby. The market was good, comics got cheaper, and once again the Chicago Blackhawks sucked wind. I found that Silver Age keys were again terrific sellers. My bread and butter is Good and Very Good condition Golden Age books with the emphasis on DC and Fawcett. You may not believe it, but I did well with average issues of Captain Marvel and Whiz. DC sales were all Supe and Bats.

These were always mainstream titles of average condition... what we call 'box stock'.

Silver Age Comics DC and Marvel run-of-the-mill books are fine... seems collectors need to fill runs and people buy comics they want to read! (Incredible!) These comics are hard to report on and are not very flashy. Everybody has them and everybody sells them. But they do sell. For some of us, we have to discount them to get some movement on them. Other folks who can sell ice to Eskimos, are selling them at full Guide or higher. They are either very lucky or they are very smart. Since my last report on these was published sometime in the Cretaceous, I like to mention more contemporary info here by con so you can get a feel for different areas of the country... and we can even compare notes.

Heroes Con in Charlotte sold lots of good Gold in the $150 to $350 ranges.

Dragon Con in Atlanta made some trades & a few sales. Silver was selling but not by me.

Wizard World Chicago! I sold everything including my bath tub. But then again I am a local boy and I can afford to haul one in. Golden Age books sold ranging from $25-2,000. Silver Age was all over the place... down to 50¢ each (we sold over 65 long boxes of 50 centers).

SuperCon in Oakland What a collector and dealer merry go round! Awesome. People who don't like the stuff at WonderCon love to come to the Oakland Convention Center to wheel and deal and yes, buy comics. Enjoyed myself greatly! Silver Age was king!

Motor City in Dearborn, Michigan Another great show... sold some Gold but mostly box-stock Silver (mostly DC). Motor City is easy to get to for a fourth of the country.

Mid Ohio Con A great show in the Ohio heartland and anything paper sells there it seems (even your aunt's old doilies). Sold and bought some nice Gold and key Silver Age Marvels.

Recent sales: Action #148 VF $250, #269 FN $455, #276 VF $100; Adventure #101 VF $600, #242 VF $160; All Star #29 VF $750; All Winners #13 VG $275; America's Best Comics ABC (Marvel) nm $90; Amazing Fantasy #15 GD $900; Amazing Fantasy #15 App VF+ $3,500; Amazing Spider-Man #6 NM- $1,100, #7 NM-720, #8 VF + $700, #17 VF $495, #19 NM-$290; Archie #2 VG+ $1,500; Atom #1 FN $320; Avengers #2 VF+ $450; Black Cat Mystery #31 (File copy) $200; Captain Marvel Adventures #51 VF $145; DareDevil #1 GD $125,VG- $400, #1 VG $450.

Detective #168 App VF (c\t) $1850, #40 cleaned\pressed app VF $1,750; Exciting #64 VF- $175; Fantastic Four #13 VF $325, #15 VF $185, #16 VF 225, #48 VF $525, #49 VF $150; Flash #1 appVF $4,500, #35 VF $425, #69 VF $295, #91 FN $350; Green Lantern (SA) #1 f $1,000; Hawkman #1 VF $450, #2 NM $180; Hulk #1 app VF + $2,700, #1 app VF- $1,500, #181 VF- $250; Human Torch #33 VG- $170.

Journey Into Mystery #3 VF $350, #83 VF $2,700, #87 VF $160; JLA #1 FN $650,#5 NM $300, #10 NM $255; Mystic #8 VF- $1,200; Showcase #4 GD w/half ad page out-tape $600; Superboy #2 VF $800, #14 FN $160; Superman #6 GD $200, #9 GD $150; Tales From The Crypt #1 FN+ $400.

Tales Of Suspense #39 VG $800; Tales To Astonish #35 VF+ $1,500, #59 NM $140; Vampy #1 NM $350; Wonder Woman #120 GD $15, #60 VG+ $60; X-Men #1 FR $250, GD $375, VG- $550, VF $2,400.

Opinions expressed in CBM Market Reports are solely those of the individual dealers and collectors who contribute them. Seasoned hobbyists are acutely aware that prices vary based on geographic location, time of year, and a number of other marketplace factors.

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MARKETPLACE MAIL

Continued from page 9

n't much room to develop the characters or have sub-plots, which Broome was so adept at doing on the Flash.

And while Murphy Anderson is one of my favorite artists, his gorilla comes off as slightly anemic compared to Infantino's Grodd, which seemed a more powerful, larger, and domineering ape.

A good example of a good idea being better used the second time around.

Added point re: Congorilla and Congo Bill: they also appeared in Action Comics in Action #280, in a Superman story involving Brainiac.

CBM #68 was a good issue all around, but I was surprised to see no mention of the largest ape of all—Titano!

Looking forward to reading the current JSA issue, which I have had for a few weeks already. But, that back issue shelf is always full!

Paul Zuckerman, via E-mail

Golden Age superheroes are boring

Just finished CBM #69. I especially liked Jon McClure's article on DC giants. I noticed one omission though. Jon didn't mention the 1962-63 80 page annual issue of Rudolph! Otherwise I found the article interesting and informative.

Here is my wish list for future issues: 1) More DC war coverage. Issue #47 was great, but I want MORE!! Atlas war coverage would be nice as well. 2) More pre-Code Atlas and Harvey Horror. 3) More pre-Code crime 4) More Kirby and Ditko pre-hero Marvel 5) More '50's sci-fi, DC in particular. 6) How about '50's DC funny animal. This area hasn't received much attention has it?

I know you've covered some or all of this material in the past, but I'd like to see more. You'll notice my list had NO superheroes on it. I would like to see a reduction, but not elimination, of superhero coverage. Frankly, I find Golden Age superheroes boring. I usually skip such articles when I see them. I find non-superhero articles infinitely more interesting.

Jeff Dahlstrom, via E-mail

MLJ please

Hey guys, I love your book and I look forward to it every month. I thought the JSA article in your last issue was great and with the recent interest generated in the new JSA, I thought it was a good idea to show younger readers who might not remember the original JSA, or those of us who remember them from reprints and back issues, just how great the original JSA was.

I was hoping you could do an article on MLJ comics of the '40s, I read your recent Archie article and I was really hoping you'd cover the superhero end of MLJ. I have a few Golden Age MLJ comics, and I believe they deserve some notice in your magazine, after all, the Black Hood was popular enough to warrant his own radio show in the '40s, and the Shield's significance as the first patriotic hero can't be ignored either. I think your staff would be the perfect people to cover this task. Thank you.

Dave Lounsberry, via E-mail

Strange Adv. Convention Blues

I've got the Convention Blues. What gave them to me? Well, Wizard World Chicago. I'm a Atom/Silver Age collector in my forties who doesn't require a lot to make him happy. I usually go in search of 10 or 12 books ranging in values from $10 - $1000. I figure if I find half of the issues I'm looking for at a reasonable price, I'm feeling good... nothing I collect is all that obscure or scarce.

One book in particular that I was after would complete a run of the first 100 issues of Strange Adventures. After looking much of the day no copies were found. Every issue around it was there but not the elusive SA #23.

I finally stumbled across a dealer who had an excellent run for DC Atom Age books. Upon asking for SA #23 he pulled out a copy in Fine+ to VF- which was exactly what I was looking for. Far from perfect but a nice collectible copy. The value for this issue is about $150 to $175... but he wanted $495! (Top Guide for NM was $360.)

I said, "Look it's just a 1950's sci-fi with no first appearances or anything special about it." Having the other 99 issues, I was a motivated buyer—how can you find anyone MORE MOTIVATED! He stood firm that someone would pay the price—hopefully not until 2099.

The other thing that made Chicago quite lackluster for me was the absence of Atom Age/Silver Age professionals. Years ago when it was the Chicago ComicCon it appeared to burst at the seams with people like Al Williamson, Gil Kane, Berni Wrightson, Stan Lee, Murphy Anderson, etc. All in all, I still managed to find several books that were reasonably priced and dealers/attendees who were great to talk to. So why complain?

In the hope that someone out there will listen, possibly make a few changes, hopefully put away their greed and make conventions fun again. Thanks for your great publication.

David Vaughn, via E-mail

Does someone out there have a copy of SA #23 for sale? Let's help a fellow collector find his last issue!

Wally's Heroes Inc.

You have a great publication!! Every issue is full of great subject topics, covers and tidbits of knowledge. My subscription is up for renewal shortly and I'll be re-signing for another year. The recent Special Edition #2 was quite good as well.

I recently was lucky enough to pick up some back issues at a show and I have a question. In #44 (the Wally Wood issue), which was excellent by the way, there are some references to "Heroes Inc. presents Cannon" one-shot. I was wondering if your expert readers might know how big of a print run this issue had? And is it really hard to find a copy?

The issue mentions that it is a hard to find book and was originally only sold through military PXs. As such I would suspect that the print run might be low. But who knows? The armed forces has plenty of people in it. The Overstreet Guide also mentions that 1,800 were warehoused of which half were stolen. Is this true? I haven't been able to track down a single copy yet.

I'd appreciate any help your readers might be able to offer. Thank you and keep up the great work.

Tony Neves, via E-mail

Strange Costumes of Batman

Here's the answer to David Loesch's question which appeared in the August 1999 issue of CBM. David wanted to know the name of a Batman story quoted in "The Steranko History of Comics." In the story a thug shoots Batman, who had been hiding in the trunk of a car (shades of Jimmy Cagney in "White Heat").

The name of the story is "The Strange Costumes of Batman" from Detective #165. I read the story when it was reprinted in the first Giant Batman Annual, published in 1961. You can now read it too, as DC has just issued a wonderful replica of the Batman Annual.

Gary, the Batman issue was great. I really enjoyed Arlen and Sherri Schumer's "The Graphic History of Batman"; it was stunning. Keep up the good work.

Collin Alscher, via E-mail

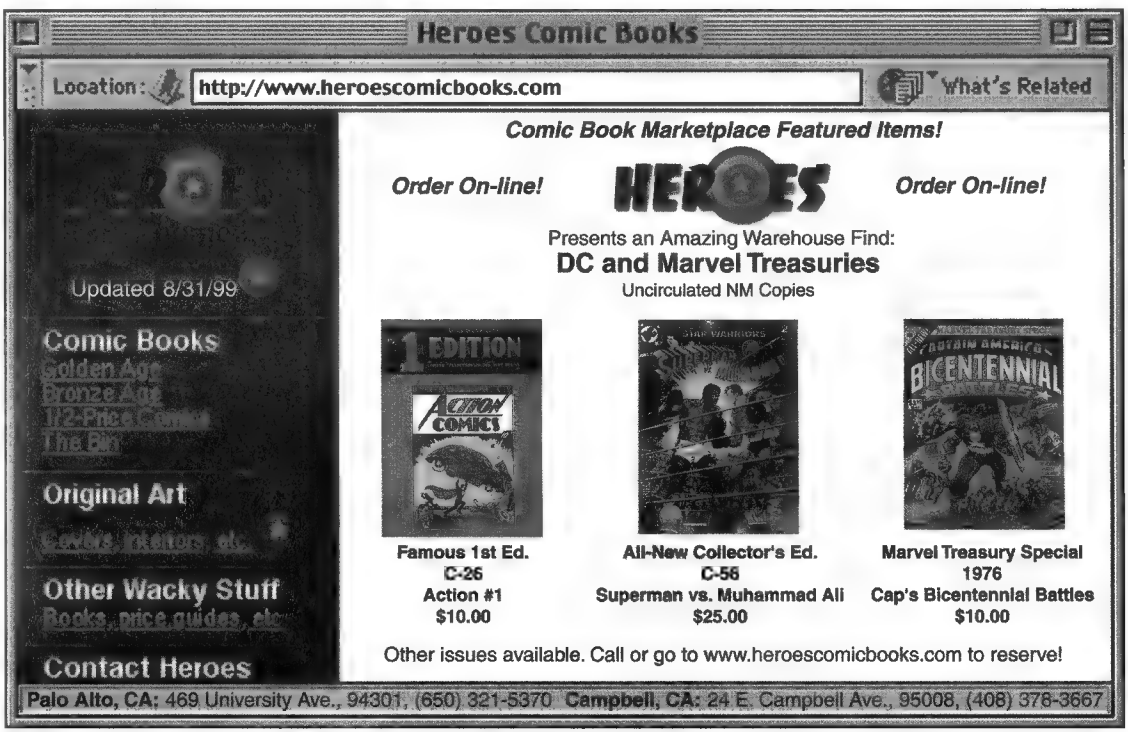
JLA subscriber

I have just finished reading CBM #69! What a great issue! It brought back a lot of memories. I was eleven years old when I rushed home from school in the summer of 1963 to check my mailbox for the latest issue of the JLA!

Sure enough, I saw the brown wrap sticking out of the box! I knew it was the new issue of JLA! I had been a subscriber since issue #3, and had a pretty good idea when it would arrive!

"What is this ?" The whole JSA was on the cover. The Sekowsky and Anderson cover was a delight to the eyes! I had been familiar with Earth Two since Flash #123. One of my all time favorites.

Mark Johnson's article was a lot of fun to read! It reflected my own enjoyment of the



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books! What wonderful stories they were. Every year I would wait for the end of school, and beginning of summer, for the annual team-up of my favorite heroes! As I was reading it on my deck, in the 85° temperature, it sent me right back! Boy, those books were a lot of fun!

The JLA has sure changed, but nothing could recapture the fun and excitement of those issues! Thanks to Julie Schwartz, Mike Sekowsky, Gardner Fox, and Bernard Sachs for their wonderful talent, and imagination! I would also like to compliment CBM for the great looking reproductions of those Silver Age DC covers! Nice job!

Every issue of CBM that I read makes me want to reread all of my books, or go out and buy the ones I don't have!

I look forward to every issue...

Bob Schuller, via E-mail

That Batman story

Regarding that Batman story that David Loesch asked about (CBM #70), he can find it in the currently-on-sale reprint edition of the first Batman annual. For the record, that story; "The Strange Costumes of Batman," written by Edmond Hamilton and drawn by Dick Sprang, originally appeared in Detective Comics #165.

Jon M. Francis, California

Where is the Yakima Collection?

Your newest CBM which just arrived the other day has an intriguing article about the recently discovered "Yakima Collection"! Wow! Thing is, you don't list any way to get in contact with David W. Smith to find out how to purchase any of these gems. I did an Internet search and didn't find anything under "Yakima Collection" and, of course, "David Smith" pulls in tons of stuff.

How can we pulp collectors find out more about how this collection will be sold? Thanks, I really enjoy CBM!

Roger Dutcher, via E-mail

Dave can be contacted at (206) 784-7300

First full-length flashback

Thoroughly enjoyed your spotlight on the Justice Society of America in CBM #69, but I wanted to offer a small addendum to Mark Ameen Johnson's article "The Silver Age of the Justice Society of America." In Mike Wilbur's sidebar, "Silver Age JSA... Believe it or not!" it is remarked that the Golden Age Batman "never made an appearance during the 1960s." That isn't true; in fact, he appeared twice, albeit neither time in Justice League Of America.

Technically his first Silver Age appearance was in the imaginary alternate ending to Detective Comics #347 (January 1966), in which the writer (Gardner Fox, if memory serves) imagines what might have happened if Batman had been killed in that issue's adventure, as the cover suggested. The Earth-Two Bruce Wayne, a little grey around the temples, comes to Earth-One to train Earth-One's Robin.

His next appearance was in "The Angel, the Rock, and the Bat" in Brave And The Bold #94 (June-July 1969), set in June 1944, where Batman teams up with Sergeant Rock shortly before D-Day. (To my knowledge, it's also the first full-length flashback story starring a Golden Age DC character in his or her prime.)

It is true, however, that the Golden Age Batman's first real (non-imaginary) modern appearance was not until Justice League Of America #82 (August 1970). Keep up the great work!

Aaron Severson, via E-mail

Columbia not Republic

Very much enjoyed the candid Chuck Cuidera interview in CBM #68. One note, on page 19. Both Superman and Blackhawk were Columbia (not Republic) serials. Keep up the good work.

Boyd Magers, via E-mail

Batgirl Batfact

Congrats on yet another fine issue with #70. Batman has never been one of my favorite characters, but I find with CBM that I read the whole issue cover to cover, regardless of my original interest in the subject of any specific story. The historical depth is appreciated. Chris Lambert's article did make one error—he mentioned that Bat-Girl was a "spin-off of the TV show" on page 54. He might be referring to "Batgirl", who was introduced later. The section in question referenced the years 1957-64, and that featured the Bat-Girl character (Betty Kane, not Barbara Gordon). The Sheldon Moldoff (or was it Dick Sprang?) art in this period is a lot of fun.

I also appreciate the market reports. Keep up the great work.

Mike Bromberg, via E-mail

Kubert Supe cover

Way, WAY back in CBM #59 (May 1998), reader Ted Filer of Ohio asked if anybody could help him locate a Superman comic book in which Supes was drafted and sent to Vietnam. Well, belatedly, I have the answer: It's Superman #216, May 1969. This comic book is rather unique in that it features a moody, atmospheric, Joe Kubert cover. (His first ever cover for Superman, I believe.)

And even though editor Mort Weisinger didn't include any story credits, I think it was written by the one and only Robert Kanigher. Several dialogue clichés and plot devices most definitely point to Mr. Kanigher. Hope that helps Mr. Filer!

John M. De Mocko, Washington

Spell things out a tad more?

In my view, split grades are a joke! Either a book is a Fine, a Very Fine, a Near Mint, etc. It cannot be both. Period! The only reasons that an individual or a dealer uses split grades is because he does not have a comfort level in his grading ability or because he wants to hijack the potential buyer for more money.

If a comic book is a Near Mint except for that one flaw which will reduce it into the category of a Very Fine… that book is a Very Fine! Period!

And another thing… Jerry Weist makes an excellent case for keeping the present 100 point system. There is no case for a ten point system unless you're trying to save type space with a number. Funny, when some of my collector buddies get together and ask that eternal question "What would you grade it at?" none of them say "Well that's a 9 or a 7.5 or whatever." Maybe the guys I hang out with have not reached that level of refinement!?!

The only arguments you have here for a ten point system is from a few dealers. They argue "80 seems farther away from 100 than 8 does from 10, so it will be easier for us to sell 8s than 80s." Those same dealers also admit that they are afraid that new customers will only want 9.0 or higher books, so that is why they want VF/NM to be 9.0 and not 8.8 where it logically belongs. All the dealer arguments are totally bogus and selfish and I'm disappointed in anyone in the collector community who goes along with their transparently commercial motives! Shame on you!

Just like anyone else in this hobby, I love to see a comic book "in grade" and chances are if given the choice of several books in various grades AND within the realm of affordability, I'm going to choose the one that looks the best from my vantage point.

And, that's the vantage point of being able to inspect the book… not look at it through a plastic slab and take someone else's word on the condition. Show me one of us who wouldn't and I'll show you a guy who likes to read his comics while eating Captain Crunch. Hey, there's room for those guys too, eh?

David Grisez, California

Batman in my trunk

On behalf of Bat-fans everywhere, thanks for the phenomenal issue (#70). Jerry Robinson, Neal Adams, and Adam West… in one book! What more could you ask for? (Well, maybe Dick Sprang, but I'm sure you'll get around to that.)

In your lettercol, David Loesch asks where he can find the vintage Batman tale… It was "The Strange Costumes of Batman," originally printed in Detective #165 (and reprinted in the new Batman Annual #1 reprint). It's a great story with a villain who gives Batman a run for his money in the brains department. In fact, the whole annual is full of incredibly well-written stories; it's Exhibit A in my argument that we old-timers aren't just blinded by nostalgia; comics actually were great once upon a time.

David Morefield, via E-mail

Esoteric parallels

Just a quick note to say that I love Pat Calhoun's approach to his column… and I really like the esoteric parallels he brings to the forefront. You can't imagine how many books I add to my want list based on his column. Thanks!

Leonard Mallory, New York

My thanks to everyone who wrote in this time, your comments and suggestions really matter to us. Send your communications to: or E-mail us at: cbm@gemstonepub.com

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Color Treasuries Key

KEY TO PAGES 42 AND 43

Pg 42 TOP ROW L to R: Marvel Treasury Ed. V1#6 (1975, Dr. Strange), Shazam! Limited Collectors Ed. #C-21 (Sum 1973), Limited Collectors 'Ed. V5#C-45 (Jun/Jul 1976)

MIDDLE ROW is L to R: Limited Collectors' Ed. V7#C-59 (1978), Superman VS. The Amazing Spider-Man (1976), Famous First Ed. V8#C-61 (1979)

THIRD ROW is L to R: Limited Collectors' Ed. V5#C-43 (Feb/Mar 1976), Limited Collectors' Ed. V5#C-46 (Aug/Sep 1976), Limited Collectors' Ed. V5#C-47 (Aug/Sep 1976)

Pg 43 TOP ROW L to R: All New Collectors' Ed. V7#C-56 (1978), Limited Collectors' Ed. V7#C-57 (1978), Marvel Treasury Ed. V1#4 (1975)

MIDDLE ROW is L to R: Famous First Ed. V2#F-6 (Apr/May 1975), MGM's Marvelous Wizard of Oz V1#1 (1975), Limited Collectors' Ed. V5#C-44 (Jun/Jul 1976)

THIRD ROW is L to R: Limited Collectors' Ed. #C-29 (1974), Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer (1976 Christmas issue), Famous First Ed. #C-30 (1974)

FANDOM FLASHBACKS

See page 62 for story →→→

How Comic Cartoons Make Fortunes

(Continued from page 67)

"From these four plates any color may be shown on the pages. The daily strips are always printed black and white. The originals are drawn so as to scale down to either five or six-column width."

Proofs of a week's supply of daily strips are sent by the syndicate to each newspaper buying the cartoon along with the mats from which plates are made in stereotyping plants. Each proof has a date, on which the strip is to be published, or a serial number so that that strip appears on the same day in all the client papers.

Fontaine Fox, who copyrights his own cartoons, draws the single picture type of comic. He got his idea for "Toonerville Topics" during a newspaper campaign against a dilapidated car line in Louisville, Ky. His cartoons are very popular.

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Horak's Humor

By Carl Horak

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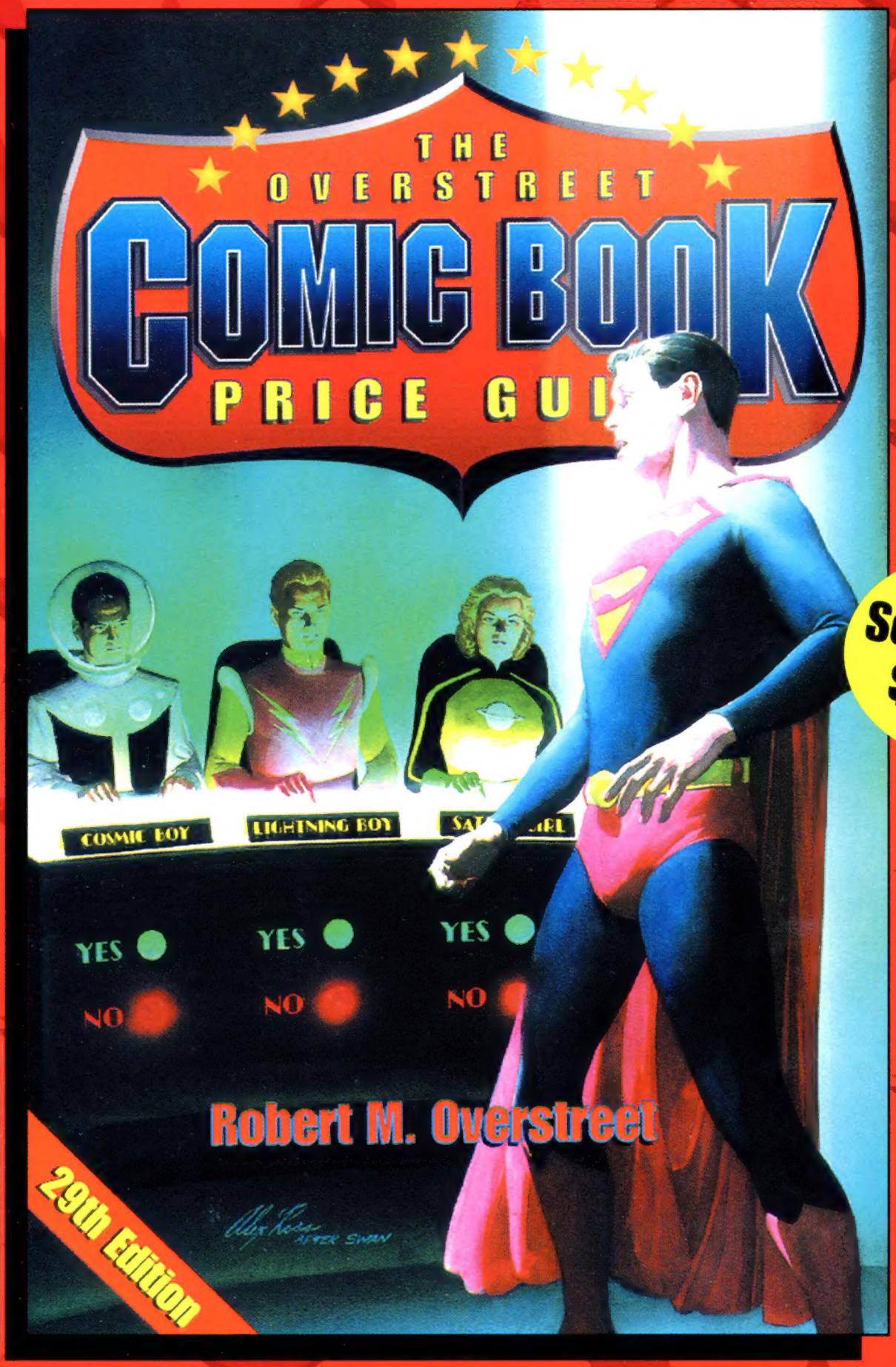
How Comic Cartoons Make Fortunes

See page 62 for story



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